ACROSS / A11
MNLF men occupy 2 Palawan villages

BUSINESS / B1
Remittances rose 3.3% in June to $1.5B

WORLD / A20
Japan limps out of recession

NEWS / A2
Mar, Korina wedding set for Oct. 23

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Sunday, August 16, 2009 ▼ 5 sections / Vol. 34 / No. 251 P18

Political derby? Cockers enter party-list contest

By Kristine L. Alave

NOW YOU CAN REALLY call it a political "derby."

A group claiming to represent cockfighting aficionados was among the organizations that have asked the Commission on

POLITICAL A10

SINGER GENEVA Cruz, 33, bares a lot of flesh with labels referring to cuts of meat to promote a provegetarian ad campaign for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta).

PHOTOJOURNALISM

Church hits big coal mine project

Catanduanes folk buck ₱6.2-B undertaking

BISHOP Manolo de los Santos of the Diocese of Virac (left) has condemned the awarding of large tracts of land in Catanduanes for coal mining to a firm linked to businessman Enrique Razon Jr. (right).

MAINNEWS

By Ferrer T. Gloria
Inquirer Southern Luzon

VIRAC, CATANDUANES —The Catholic Church and other groups are objecting to a plan by a firm linked to business tycoon Enrique Razon Jr. to extract coal worth P6.2 billion in the province, saying mining would destroy its forest cover and biodiversity, cause flooding, and pollute its waterways.

The groups also claim that the Department of Energy awarded 7,000 hectares of land in the province to Monte Oro Resources Energy Inc. in 2008 for coal exploration without public consultations.

The large swathe of land assigned to Monte Oro in the towns of San Andres, Caramoran and Panganiban is equivalent to the land area of 332 Luneta Parks or three times bigger than Makati City.

Razon has an interest in Monte Oro Grid Resources, a wholly owned subsidiary of Monte Oro Resources Energy, a company formed in 2006 to invest in mining, oil and gas, and infrastructure in the Philippines.

Monte Oro Grid is a leading member of the consortium that won the bidding for the power grids of National Transmission

CHURCH A13

Singer strips naked to encourage public to stop eating meat

By Pocholo Concepcion
Entertainment

FOR GENEVA CRUZ, SHOWING SKIN WAS A GOOD way to remind the world of the bare essentials: All animals, including the two-legged species, have the same body parts.

The 33-year-old singer went naked yesterday for the provegetarian campaign of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) Asia Pacific, and gladly let the media ogle, er, see just what she

SINGER A4

GMA allots ₱5B more for direct cash aid to poor

By Christine V. Esguerra

IN PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo launching a cluster of stories after sailing into a firestorm for the supposedly extravagant dinners she and her party had during her latest US trip?

Ms Arroyo yesterday increased from 700,000 to 1 million the number of poor households to benefit from her conditional cash transfer program also known as the "Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino" (PPP) program.

The increase would mean an additional ₱5 billion in the existing ₱30-billion budget for the program, according to Jaime Pujeda, deputy presidential spokesperson.

The move was the latest in a string of Palace efforts apparently aimed at showing that austerity—and the poor—were a priority of Ms Arroyo.

The moves came amid controversy over the reported million-peso dinner Ms Arroyo and her delegation had in New York and another dinner, costing the equivalent of about ₱750,000, they had in Washington D.C.

Just last Sunday Malacañang made a surprise announcement that Ms Arroyo was foregoing plans to purchase a new P1.2-

GMA ALLOTS A11

Defense chief eyes 'operational leaks'

By Jocelyn R. Uy
and Christine O. Avendaño

DEFENSE SECRETARY GILBERT Teodoro Jr. yesterday said there may have been "operational leaks" in the military action against the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan in which 23 soldiers were killed.

At the same time, Teodoro stressed that the security precautions taken by ground commanders prior to the deadly Aug. 12 gun battle in Tipo-Tipo town were "unsatisfactory" and carried out "in the most careful way."

DEFENSE A11

ESCAPE FROM CROSSFIRE

They want to be home for Ramadan

By Ryan D. Rosauro
Inquirer Mindanao

(Last of two parts)

DATU PIANG, MAGUINDANAO—Around midmorning just after recess, a Grade 5 class of some 30 pupils at Tuwa Gumbay Piang General Elementary School was having a short quiz on population education.

SPECIAL REPORT

The teacher was raising her voice to put across every question amid the loud singing of "One, little two, little three; little fishies . . ." by some 50 Grade 1 pupils who were occupying the other half of the room, set apart only by a blackboard.

Underneath the room in the raised wooden Gabaldon-type building, several babies cried for attention.

Since Aug. 21 last year, the school, which occupies half a-

THEY! B3

USAIN BOLT of Jamaica leaves a world-class field behind in another record-smashing run in the men's 100 meters final at the Olympic stadium in Berlin on Sunday.

9.58 SECONDS

Bolt shatters 100-meter world record

BERLIN—USAIN BOLT CROSSED the finish line, saw his record-setting time on the clock and spread his arms as if he were soaring like a bird.

About all this guy can't do is fly. And by saving his celebration until after the finish line this time, he showed how fast a man really can go on two feet.

The Jamaican shattered the world record again on Sunday, running 100 meters in 9.58 seconds at the world championships to turn his much-anticipated race against Tyson Gay into a one-man show.

That was 0.11 seconds faster than the mark Bolt himself set last year at the Beijing

BOLT A6

Korean shatters Tiger myth, is first Asian to win major title

A TAMED Tiger Woods looks down after suffering a shock defeat at the 2009 PGA Championship on Sunday.

SPORTS

CHASKA, MINNESOTA —South Korean Yang Yong-eun entered territory where no Asian male had gone before when he upstaged Tiger Woods by winning the US PGA Championship by three strokes on Sunday.

Despite several near misses since Taiwan's Lu Liang-huan ran Lee Trevino desperately close at the 1971 British Open, the golfing world had patiently awaited the first Asian-born winner of a major.

Yang's astonishing breakthrough at the expense of Woods on a rain-splashed afternoon at Hazeltine National was simply a mirror of time, so-

GIANT slayer Yang Yong-eun celebrates after winning the 2009 PGA Championship golf tournament at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Minnesota on Sunday.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Some and tropical and experience mostly cloudy skies and scattered rains while showers will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rains and thunderstorms.

Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Kalibo/Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Legaspi	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Dumaguete	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Catarman	Mostly Cloudy	General Santos	Partly Cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

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6/42
22 17 7 7
SUERTRES
1 1 5
4 4 6
FOUR DIGIT
7 9 1 1
9 2 9
MEGALOTTO 6/45
3 11 19 23 29 35
P23,236,261.20

OFWs arrested for 'mixed gathering'

RP officials press for their release; mull separate male, female centers

By Cynthia D. Balana, Jeremy Aning and Marlon Ramos

THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN RIYADH HAS come to the rescue of 18 Filipinos workers, most of them members of Migrante International, the Filipino overseas workers' confederation, following their arrest for illegal "mixed gathering" in Saudi Arabia.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said in a statement yesterday the group consisting of 18 officers and members of Migrante and eight Filipino female workers, were arrested by Saudi police during a raid on Aug. 14 in the Sulaiyah area.

Saudi law forbids the gathering of men and women together in private and public places, unless they are married couples or with their families.

Philippine Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Antonio Villamor sent embassy personnel to the police station to discuss the release of the detained Filipinos and observe the conduct of the investigation.

Meeting going on

According to the DFA, embassy representatives informed the investigating officer that Migrante is a nongovernmental organization recognized by the government and that a meeting might have been taking place when the residence of a Mr. Jeanne caretaker was raided.

Riyadh-based John Leonard Monteverde, regional coordinator of Migrante Middle East, said no case had been filed against the 30 members of Kapatiran sa Ellining Bisayan (KSB), a local unit of Migrante.

He said Saudi police had agreed to release them to the custody of their sponsors or employers.

Only one released

Monteverde said only one, Evelyn Arenol, KSB chair, was taken out of jail by his employer. The sponsors of the nine other KSB members had yet to go to the police station.

A DFA statement, however, said three workers—Rhoda Jesus, Migrante's Riyadh coordinator, and two others—have been released while the rest remained under police custody while the legitimacy of their stay in Saudi Arabia is being evaluated by the employers of their iqamas (residency permits).

Embassy representatives had offered to contact the employers of the Filipino workers.

According to Garry Martinez, Migrante International chair, the KSB officers were arrested in a safehouse which the organization provided for runaway OFWs. They were conducting their regular weekly case dialogues and counseling for OFW victims of maltreatment and abuse who ran away from their employers.

DFA, DOLE blamed

Monteverde blamed DFA and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for failing to set up additional resource centers and shelters for distressed OFWs, especially those who run away from abusive employers.

The raid of the KSB safehouse has led Migrante-Saudi Arabia to consider setting up gender-segregated offices and safehouses for distressed OFWs.

"But we have meager resources, and we rely on our members who volunteer the use of their homes for temporary shelters and who give contributions to provide food and other needs for the runaways and the distressed," Monteverde said.

Satisfy Saudi cops

To satisfy the religious police, he said that Migrante-Saudi Arabia has issued a memorandum calling on its subchapters to dool separately with cases of female OFWs and assigns female staffers to interview and assist them.

Martinez, for his part, also called on the Philippine government to "decisively address" migrant rights violations in Saudi Arabia which, he said, "are increasingly becoming more serious to women and increasingly."

Meanwhile, 24 Filipino household workers who ran away from their employers in Saudi Arabia returned to the country Sunday night.

Carmelita Dimzon, Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (Owwa) administrator, yesterday said the group of runaway OFWs arrived from Riyadh shortly before midnight on board Etihad Airways flight 316.

She said the OFWs had been stranded at the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh as they did not have their employers to sign the exit papers.

"Some of them complained of physical abuse while others said their employers did not give them their salaries," Dimzon told the inquirer.

Aside from temporary shelter, the said Owwa also paid the transportation expenses of the OFWs.

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Schools can expel pregnant students, says solon

ITS ENCOURAGEMENT should for the state to prohibit Catholic schools from expelling or refusing to accept students and teachers for being catered mothers, according to a private representative.

A former party-list Rep. Glyceria Sarmiento III said the Magna Carta of Women or Republic Act No. 9710 infringes on academic freedom and the right to the free exercise of religion.

He said Sen. Pia Cayetano may have misinterpreted the new law when she said pregnancy outside of marriage was no reason to expel or turn away teachers and students from schools.

Sarmiento, dean of the San Beda Alabang College of Law, said if Cayetano had correctly interpreted the provisions of the law, then she should not name "opens itself to control" for violating the Constitution.

According to Sarmiento, Catholic schools have means to teach Catholic morals, and part of moral theology is the "inherent malice of consensual extramarital sex."

Thus, institutions of the Catholic Church could impose sanctions on those who violate its teachings, he said.

"The legal point is that it belongs to Catholic theology and to the Catholic family that extramarital sex, though consensual, is wrong," Leila S. Salaverria

ROYAL VISITOR: The King of Bahrain, Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa (center), arrived in Manila yesterday for a five-day private visit. He was welcomed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo (left) and Ambassador Arnulfo Aguilar.

To supporters, ailing composer is Nat'l Artist

By Nikko Dizon

TO FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES GATHERED at a hospital yesterday, veteran guerilla composer Ramon Santos is a National Artist.

Santos, 67, has been confined at the Philippine Heart Center since last week after suffering a heart attack.

A former dean of the University of the Philippines College of Music, Santos was dropped from the 2009 list of National Artists recommended by the National Committees on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and Cultural Centers of the Philippines (CCP), and was replaced by four others recommended by Malacañang.

His exclusion from the list was widely protested by his colleagues who also expressed outrage over President Macapagal-Arroyo's confirmation of the promotion meant on musician-film director Carlo J. Caparas and Nonon, at Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) head Cecile Guidote-Alvarez.

Fr. Ruben Reyes, who yesterday officiated Mass for his speedy recovery, said: "Sr. Ramon Santos is no longer a private person after what happened. People who love him and respect him would just like to express their love and concern for him."

Santos' sisters attended the healing Mass, as did his colleagues from the UP like Dr. Ruby Alcantara, who hailed his contributions to Philippine music.

Harold Dom-in Mauyaling played a couple of tunes on her bamboo nose flute for Santos' healing.

Mauyaling, whose husband Jose was killed allegedly by a military officer in 2003, plays the flute for "social healing."

Meanwhile, the UP College of Law is set to file comments in the Supreme Court a petition for injunction to stop the proclamation of the new National Artists, according to writer Sylvia Mayuga, one of the artists protesting the new set of National Artists.

The petition seeks to stop the exercise of a presidential prerogative by Malacañang in some National Artists in case outside of the selection process of the NCCA and the CCP.

If the high court gives due course to the petition, Santos will be restored to the original list of National Artists selected by the NCCA and MCCA. The others on the list are painters Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, the late linguist/novelist Lazaro Francisco (Discourse) and the late filmmaker Manuel Conde.

It also means that Alcuaz and Caparas will be dropped from the awards. With a report from Lila Zubiaga

Mar-Korina nuptials set for Oct. 23

THE MYSTERIOUS BEYOND TROUBLE-ly publicized wedding of Sen. Mar Roxas and broadcaster Korina Sanchez.

In an interview on the news program "TV Patrol," Sanchez said the wedding will take place on Oct. 23—just two months away.

Sanchez also happens to be her birthday month.

"Wag nlang sapatin ang Oct. 23 is a good date," the broadcaster said.

Except for Philippine National Red Cross's Boss Nograd, the couple have yet to reveal their other wedding sponsors.

Sanchez and James Yap Jr., the son of actress and TV host Kris Aquino, will be the ring bearer. She also said children and TV host Shaina Castillo's son, Matthew, will be the Bible bearer.

Sanchez and she and Roxas are wondering holding the ceremony at the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros, Manila, or the Our Domingo Church in Quezon City.

Duque defied TRO on ads, says lawyer

THINGS ARE NOT "OK DOH-E" FOR Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

A lawyer rented by solon's Manila-Regional Trial Court to cite Duque for contempt after he allegedly defied a temporary restraining order (TRO) by placing a couple of newspaper advertisements using P2 million in public funds a day after the TRO was issued.

Lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr. yesterday filed a petition asking Manila RTC Branch 22 Judge Marlen dela la Cruz Jr. to order the health secretary to explain why he should not be cited for contempt.

Francisco, in the motion, said that despite the Aug. 14 TRO, Duque placed ads in three major broadsheets on Aug. 15.

The lawyer said the advertisements were published with the words "Celebrating freedom from high cost of Medicines" and ended the slogan "DE.DOHK, DE es Kalusugan! Oh! es Kalusugan, Oh! es Bayan!" which were explicitly prohibited by the court.

"The two full-page, multicolored political advertisements of Duque, which came out in three leading newspapers, cost the Filipino people P2,110,000, Yes P."

Francisco said Rule 71 in Cine 3 of the Revised Rules of Court which punishes disobedience to a court order.

"Thus, plaintiff Francisco respectfully prays that defendant Secretary Duque be ordered to explain why he violated the TRO issued by the honorable court and to show cause why he should not be punished for his insolence," the lawyer said in his motion.

Previously, Francisco filed a petition before Manila RTC Branch 23 for the issuance of a TRO and writ of preliminary injunction to restrain Duque, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr., Education Secretary Jesli Lapus Jr., Vice-President Noli de Castro, Tesda director general Augusto Syjuco, Popcom chair Elenita Gerardino, Executive secretary Eduardo Ermita, Agriculture Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman, and the Office of the Solicitor General from issuing out with paid political advertisements using public funds.

Except for Duque, Judge de la Cruz did not issue a TRO for the other officials, because the evidence was "insufficient to establish the factual and legal basis to enjoin the defendants, except defendant Secretary of the Department of Health, from state sponsored acts."

Jaymee T. Anafinche

'Laiban project OK but not take-or-pay'

By Doris C. Dumlao

HONG KONG—THE PROPOSED $1.81-billion Laiban dam project is a welcome initiative to ensure a long-term bulk water supply for Metro Manila but consumers will benefit most from an arrangement without a take-or-pay provision, officials of water distribution concession Maynilad Water Services Inc. said.

Under a take-or-pay scheme, water distributors Maynilad and Manila Water Services Inc. will have to pay the source for a minimum water supply volume whether or not the volume is consumed.

"If we do that, then are they the same amount of additional tariff to the consumers whether you use it or not," Maynilad president Ramon Ang, Singson told visiting reporters from Manila.

"We are saying that in terms of protecting the consumers, the best scheme is not to enter into a take-or-pay arrangement," Singson said, stressing however that Maynilad was not opposing the proposed joint venture between multiple regulator Manila Electric Co. and leverage subsidiary and private sector proponent San Miguel Corp. over the Laiban project.

The proposed Laiban dam is to be built in the Rodriguez basin in Tanay, Rizal, which drains a watershed of about 28,000 hectares on the slopes of the Sierra Madre mountain range.

Hydropower

It aims to provide 1,019 million liters of water a day to about 3.9 million people, or 600,000 households, in northern Metro Manila.

The unsolicited project proposal submitted by MER, who has a hydropower component that will produce about 25 megawatts of electricity.

Under government regulations, unsolicited proposals under the build-operate-transfer scheme must be swiss-challenged to a "better challenge," in which other interested investors may submit proposals which the original proponent would have to match.

Since no other group submitted a counter-proposal when the deadline lapsed on July 8, the MWSS is negotiating with San Miguel on the project.

The terms of the joint venture have not been finalized. In the meantime, at least two other groups have submitted alternative proposals to the MWSS to supply bulk water.

"We're open to whatever arrangement MWSS says we should do. Provided it's not take-or-pay, we can say[sic] can be done," Singson said.

He said Maynilad and Manila Water previously submitted a proposal for a new water source but the scheme proposed was for the MWSS itself to undertake it solely but two concessionaires under a concession agreement.

Concession fee

"The difference with a concession fee arrangement is we're able to spread the amount[sic] that MWSS will be paying for the loan as against a take-or-pay which assumes that if the proponent says I will produce 1,000 million liters a day' whether we use it or not, we pay the same amount for that volume, and if we do that then we chip the same amount of additional tariff to the consumers whether you use it or not," he explained.

If the water distributors in turn pass on the higher cost to consumers, he said consumers can reduce their consumption.

"Because of the price elasticity we're already seeing that the higher your tariff goes, the consumers start reducing their consumption. We've seen a significant reduction in terms of the increase in the consumption of industrial and commercial accounts which really contribute significantly in terms of your revenues," he said.

According to Ang, households, industrial users would likely curb consumption if tariffs in the area rise.

"You will have about companies using rainwater for cleaning the sidewalks, for irrigation," he said.

Preparatory work on the Laiban Dam project started in 1979. Construction was suspended in 1983 and about 1,000 families settled in the dam site.

Based on a previously proposed concession arrangement, the MWSS will undertake the bulk water supply project and proponents will pay the MWSS concession fees under a long-term agreement but at the end of the agreement, the dam will still be turned by the government.

Offering bribe a crime—DOJ

By Alberto M. Lopez

SIMPLY OFFERING A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL a bribe is a crime, the Department of Justice said yesterday.

State Prosecutor Aud Delfin Mowes said this was so until he found at Appeals Justice Jose Sabio Jr.'s dance ideas an alleged P1.9 million offer from businessman Primo de Rivera for the dismissal of cases he have been prosecuted.

De Rivera stands accused of offering P1.9 million to Sabio for the latter to withdraw himself from a case involving Manila Electric Co. and the Government Service Insurance System.

He is facing charges in the Makati Metropolitan Trial Court.

"We claim that since there is no showing that Justice Sabio was actually consigned and accepted the offer of P1.9 million, there he is not liable under Article 212," said Mowes in an eight-page opposition to a motion to quash Information De Rivera had filed with the court.

"But Article 212 of the Revised Penal Code already imposes penalties on those who have made offers or promises," Mr. De Rivera argued that he is being indicted for attempted corruption and not consummated corruption," said Mowes after the hearing yesterday.

De Rivera purportedly offered Sabio P1.9 million to give way to Justice Bienvenido Reyes as the chairman-judge of the CA's sixth division which was hearing a case between Meralco and the GSIS.

Meralco control

De Rivera had reportedly said he was acting on behalf of Meralco chair Manolo Lopez. The case involved the validity of proxies in the vote for control of Meralco between the Lopez family and Winston Garcia, president of GSIS.

Lopez has denied involvement in the bribing De Rivera to representation.

De Rivera turned the tables on Sabio, saying it was the Justice who had demanded P50 million from him for a favorable ruling for Meralco.

Mowes said De Rivera was also rightly charged by the DOJ for violating Presidential Decree No. 46 for "act making it punishable for public officials and employees to receive, and for private persons to give, gifts on any occasion, including Christmas."

He said Cui under the decree issued by then President Ferdinand Marcos, "there is no need for a public official to be actually corrupted, or in the case of Justice Sabio, for him to actually receive the P10 million."

De Rivera also earlier, the motion that Olongapo City prosecutor Emilio de los Santos was "incarcerated" to file the charges against Primo without City.

He said charges should not have been filed against him because De los Santos had no jurisdiction over the case.

Mowes said it was then Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez who ordered the fact-finding to conduct the preliminary investigation of the case.

"Under the law on the National Prosecution Service, the DOJ secretary has absolute discretion as to control and supervise all prosecutors. There's nothing illegal about that," Mowes said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, August 10, 2010
19th Week in Ordinary Time
Saint Wenceslaus

1st Reading: Hab 1:12-2:4a
Gospel: Mt 19:23-30

Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven."

Overhearing this the disciples were astonished and said, "Who, then, can be saved?" Jesus looked steadily at them and answered, "For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible."

Then Peter spoke up and said, "You see we have given up everything to follow you; what will be our lot?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you truly, at the renewal of the world, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you, too, will sit on twelve thrones to rule the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or property for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and be given eternal life. Many who are now first will be last, and many who are now last will be first."

Commentary:

Jesus is not a loser-ones, who had led a life of obscurity, and yet he was one of seven undertaken something great. Even though he might have known that God was with him, failure was near to birth. This made it difficult for him to maintain the consistency of God and the darkness, into which the disciples were plunging headlong. The angel of God said Jesus to act as Israel's deliverer, and their mission. When the angel called the Israelis Gideon, called mighty God made known.

God rules delight in strengthening the humble and humbling the proud. Habbut wanted to have his faith confirmed. Now, while we don't expect signs before our eyes as Habbut received, we must pray earnestly to God that he will strengthen our faith. As with Habbut, we will then be able to listen for the powerful working of His spirit there. By such a spirit anyone, even those, we shall know that we have found grace in God's sight. Even if our enemy thrives, when we hear God's words of peace within us, we shall know, for sure, that we shall persevere against all odds.

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11 November, 2009 New Delhi Hyatt Regency Hotel
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Fitch still sees profits for RP banks

By Michelle V. Rosas

INTERNATIONAL CREDIT RATING agency Fitch Ratings expects the Philippine banking system to show resiliency amid the global economic downturn, saying that it will remain profitable even if counterparts in industrialized nations have suffered in meltdowns.

In a statement yesterday, Fitch said banks in the country are generally expected to post net incomes this year, although at slower growth rates than last year. Fitch said that even if the amount of defaulted by borrowers increased as a result of tough economic conditions, banks have adequate capital to absorb credit risks.

"...Most rated banks seem to have reasonable earnings and capital cushions to absorb high asset losses in the current challenging environment, and therefore their rating outlooks are still stable," Fitch said.

Fitch described its outlook as "stable" with risk on local banks, meaning their current credit ratings are not likely to be downgraded within the short term, after it could period is "always tied" and found that the banks should remain sufficiently liquid even under a worst-case scenario of rising non-performing loans (NPLs).

Bank loans become nonperforming if three remain unpaid at least 90 days upon maturity.

Fitch said a hypothetical scenario wherein the banks' NPL ratio—the proportion of bad debts to total loans portfolio—would also until peak to 10.5 percent by end 2010. In end 2008, the NPL ratio stood at 4.5 percent.

According to Fitch, even if the NPL ratio rises to 10.5 percent, banks will be able to better the corresponding credit losses and still register profits.

"This suggests that the deterioration in asset quality will have to be fairly dramatic and extremely rapid for banks' profits to be noticeably wiped out. In the agency's opinion, and despite the weak macro environment, the likelihood of such an occurrence is still low. As such, Fitch projects that local banks would still register reasonable amounts of profits in 2009/2010, albeit lower than in 2008," Fitch said.

According to data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the country's banking sector posted an overall net income of P46.4 billion in 2008, 34 percent lower than in 2007.

The BSP said banks could post even lower profits this year, but noted that it would still be a welcome development given that the financial sector in the United States and advanced economies in Europe have suffered from liquidity problems.

The US and European economies have experienced a credit crunch, as banks become more reluctant or incapable to address their credit needs.

The financial sector curb-drawn in the United States stemmed from huge exposure to the US sub-prime market, which is composed of high-risk borrowers of housing loans.

Consumer group for oil regulation

CONSUMER AND OIL PRICE WATCH (OAR) is set Congress for legislation that would return the country to a regulated oil industry to ensure lower prices of petroleum products.

COPW chair Noel T. Gonzaludo in a statement yesterday said, "The Department of Energy has consistently said that down the industry is deregulated. They are free to increase their prices even if Shell and Petron, as refiners, can use Mimas of Platts Singapore pricing and our Dubai (which is usually cheaper) under AFTA as markers and oil companies will determine pricing."

"Oil refiners refuse to buy forward and increased undercovered inventories to 5% billion because the government proceeded them to raise their increases to 7.5 centavos per week to soften the impact on consumers and the ruling public," he added.

For her part, Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes told reporters yesterday he was amenable to a review of the Oil Deregulation Law "in order to make everyone understand the difference between a regulated and a deregulated environment." — Amy R. Remo

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has revoked the license of the

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Korean shatters Tiger myth, is first Asian to win major

From page A-1

cording to world's No. 1 player. (See related story in Sports, Page A-17)

"It was exciting to happen one day," Woods, who has a Thai mother, told reporters after Inspeo on the last two holes enabled Ozaki his hopes of a 15th major.

"If anyone would have thought A would have been a Korean player, people probably would have suspected it to be EJ (Choi) because obviously he's played well for such a long period. But YE, has won some a couple of big events. He won one here in the States prior to this down in West Palm (Florida) and he's growing better. He's playing better," Woods added.

Yang, who began the final round at Hazeltine two strokes behind the pace-setting Woods, won his maiden PGA Tour title at the Honda Classic in Florida in March.

"We've had a lot of great players over the years, starting with Isaabo Ozaki, and Isao (Aoki) has come close," added Woods, who struggled on the greens on the way to a three-over 75.

Since the popular 68, Lu watch his 18-shooter push yde missed one to Tiesdays by a stroke at Royal Melbidie, Asia has celebrated only one other second place finishes at major championships.

Near misses

Japan's Aoki, one of golf's best exponents of the short game, broke the 72-hole scoring record in the 1998 US Open at Bellwood, but even that was not enough as Jack Nicklaus retained it by another two shots to win.

In the 1983 US Open at Oakland Hills, Taiwan's TC Chen equaled the tournament record for the first 36 and 54 holes, but his victory hopes disappeared with a 77 to tie for second, a stroke adrift of Andy Bonds.

In recent years, Thailand's Thongchai Jaidee, Japan's Shigeki Maruyama and Korean Choi have raised hopes in Asia, but it was Yang who finally wrote his name into the record books.

Asked what impact his breakthrough win would have in the region, Yang replied: "I think you have to go back to '98 with the women's golf when Pak Se-ri won the US Open."

Korean Pak moved to America as a 20-year-old and clinched two majors in her rookie season in 1998, the McDonald's LPGA Championship and the US Women's Open.

"Then really ensured a huge boom in Korea golf wise where everybody started picking up clubs (instead of tennis rackets and baseball bats," Yang added, speaking through an interpreter.

"And with EJ Choi winning his first tournament (the 2002 New Orleans Classic) on the oh-so-tough PGA Tour, that also increased golf's popularity," he added.

YE Yang poses with the Wanamaker Trophy after his three-stroke victory over Tiger Woods at the 87th PGA Championship.

"I hope my win would be something quite parallel to my impact, both for golf in Korea as well as golf in Asia, so that all the young golfers, Korean and Asian, will be able to build their dreams and expand their horizons a bit."

A great day for Asian golf

"It's a great, great day for Asian golf," Asian Tour executive chair KJ Eric Fan said. "Probably our biggest day. It's always been our hope that we will see an Asian player win a major, and that day is here."

Yang will provide so much inspiration. Our players have never contended that strong in majors. Maybe top 10 but never really contended. And now we've not only got a winner, but someone who beat Tiger Woods. It was so high pressure as you can see," he added.

There are a number of players in their early 20s from Thailand, South Korea, India and other Asian countries who are probably more technically sound than their older compatriots were, he said.

"These players will push in their late 20s, and it was always a case of a young promise but down to manner," Fan said.

"But this has raised the bar a lot, and Yang's win will provide them with a long mental boost. I see a great future ahead for Asian golf."

One of those young players—Asian Tour rookie Mukhzmmad Siddiker—already because the first player from Bangladesh on the Asian Tour.

Huge amount of confidence

"It's really exciting news to see an Asian winner at a major," Siddiker said. "This is good for Asian Tour players in that it shows us that we can win a major. It gives a huge amount of confidence."

Also Gamke, chief executive of the PGA of Australia, which has ongoing contract with events in South Korea and Asian rival the recently formed OneAsia Tour, said Yang's win would help nurture the sport in the region.

"It will also provide a huge amount of confidence for Asian male players because it's taken such a long time for them to break through in a major," Gamke said. "We need a couple of Asian heroes."

Gamke said Yang's win would no doubt increase the number of regular golfers in Asia.

He said the biggest boom for grounds was in China, where the Australian PGA was in the second year of a program with the China Golf Association to train between 5,000 to 10,000 local Chinese players.

"They've got about 1.1 million who have memberships at golf courses, and to tryout of 350 golf courses," Gamke said. "They are growing at about 40 percent a year, and marking every hunt on their elite player programs. Yang's win will help there as well as everywhere else."

The Asian region will also get a boost when a World Golf Championship event—the HSBC Championship—will be played from Nov. 5-8 in Shanghai, with Woods in the field. Reports/Avon Alvarez and AP

Bolt shatters 100-meter world record

From page A-1

Olympics...the biggest improvement in the 100-meter record since electronic timing began in 1968.

Gay, his closest rival, broke the American mark with his 9.71 performance and still looked like he was jogging...finishing a fine big strides behind Bolt in second place.

Bolt's only competition threatened to the clock.

And when he's really trying, not but-dogging it over the line the way he did in China, even close itself doesn't stand a chance.

"I don't run for world records," said Bolt, who zoomed the line with a slight breeze at his back.

Yet those records always seem to find him.

He can go even faster

He thinks he can go even faster.

"I know I said 9.4," Bolt said, grinning. "You never know. I'll just keep on working."

Last year in Beijing, Bolt shut his race down early, waving his arms and celebrating about 20 meters before he got to the line. Afterward, the president Jacques Rogge of the International Olympic Committee, viewed it as a sign of bad sportsmanship. More seen it as a welcome sign of relief for a sport that needed some good news after years of doping and scandal.

Here's this week, the Jamaican crackerjack was making headlines for the wrong reasons—a complicated doping case. There, a group of athletes who were considered in the world by the country's track officials because they didn't participate in team training camp got ostracized in the aftermath of international officials.

Bolt made everyone forget about that and showed, once again, what a great sport track can be when the focus is on the track, not doping control and the cursing reporters.

Owens' stratosphere

Bolt rise his latest astrogen table race at Olympic Stadium in Berlin, the history-filled home of the 1936 Olympics where Jesse Owens became the world's biggest track star.

Bolt lives in Owens' stratosphere now, having set the 100 world record three times and also owning the 200-meter record thanks to the 19.30 he ran in Beijing to break Michael Johnson's 12-year-old mark.

Man for has added the world championship last were by the in 2007, to his Olympic title.

A finished professor realized of Bolt could've gone 9.55 if he'd not had run through the line in Beijing. Bolt almost made that guy look like a genius.

"He's like a created game person," Jesse into Owens' son said. "I can't imagine going 9.71 and not winning. That will arte every race in history except for today (and at the Olympics)."

Colorful character

It's easy to see why Bolt is such a crowd favorite. He's a colorful character who loves to entertain. The crack in his stage and he didn't disappoint on Sunday.

Before climbing into the blocks, Bolt gave spectators a quick wave and did his trademark bow-and-arrow pose.

Then drew his real show started.

Unlike the Olympics, where he couldn't run the blocks, Bolt knew no this time to his cut-crowd Poison, opening a sizable lead on the field after 20 meters.

From there, it would have been a stroll in the park. But there was no letting up this time. Before crossing the line, Bolt looked to his right and then Gay once—over his the pairs—and then took at the clock. He have lit up as he spread the digits "9.58" appear on the screen next to the clock.

Victory lap

The party was on. He grabbed a flag and did a victory lap with countryman Asafa Powell, who finished with the bronze at 9.84.

Bolt and his compatriot even stopped midway down the track and did a little dance number. He finished his run with a flourish, pounding his chest and pointing to the sky.

Then he took a victory lap, waving to the crowd and posing for photographers.

Gay, who's been overshadowed by Bolt since he burst onto the scene in 2008, was gracious in defeat.

"He's a great competitor," Gay said. "He's a great guy. He's always been cool with me. I congratulate him. He's a great athlete."

Bolt's performance was so dominant that it left Gay and Powell looking like they were running in quicksand.

Gay, who's been training with Bolt's coach Glen Mills, said he was pleased with his performance.

"I'm happy with it," he said. "I'm happy with my season. I'm happy with my performance. I'm happy with my time. I'm happy with my place."

Powell, who's been battling a hamstring injury, said he was pleased to be on the podium.

"I'm happy to be here," he said. "I'm happy to be healthy. I'm happy to be competing."

Bolt, who's been dealing with a hamstring injury of his own, said he was pleased with his performance.

"I'm happy with it," he said. "I'm happy with my season. I'm happy with my performance. I'm happy with my time. I'm happy with my place."

USAIN BOLT: Next target is 9.4 seconds

Too bad the song wasn't from rapper Akon, who wrote about the epitaph to a song, the lyrics going, "Quicker than Usain Bolt, the fastest thing runnin'."

Near came pictures—lots of flashes popping—and hugs as Bolt greeted everyone who called his name—and they were numerous. The entire victory lap took about 20 minutes.

Or about 10-30-40 longer than it took to run his 100. AP

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Singer strips naked

From page A-1

means that the best way to show fellow animals respect is to go vegetarian.

A few minutes past lunchtime, in a Malibu studio, Geneva—mother of a 12-year-old son but looking youthful, slim and gorgeous—casually posed for photographers in a see-through, sequin-covered negligee, stroking a rooster's diaphragm normally displayed in a supermarket's meat section.

Right below her "loins" and "wang," Geneva held a sign that read: "All Animals Have the Same Body Parts. Go Vegetarian."

Dozens of media were from national public relations and international wire agencies, each shoot scrambling.

Jason Baker, director of Peta Asia-Pacific, an affiliate of Peta United States, which claims to be "the world's largest animal rights organization with more than 1.6 million members," explained the campaign and how Geneva got Genevieve be a part of it.

"We learned that she was really vegetarian and had protect Peta videos on her website," Baker told the bayanan.

"We've been talking with her for a year ... Vegetarianism is not [just] about animals or rats or hippies anymore. It's about having young and sexy ... it's for everyone and Genevieve is one beautiful example. She's stunning."

Campaign target

Past campaigns featured actress-singer Pamela Anderson, actor Dierbet Orampas and TV host-model Bonjy Manzoor. The new campaign needs a nude Geneva will target both the print and Web media.

"The Web is a great equalizer," Baker noted. "Some of the most successful advocacy campaigns are being done through the Internet."

He noted that, in the past, Peta had a hard time dealing with TV stations that didn't want to or try to get the best of opposing viewers, especially those selling meat products.

It was like competing with the whole meat industry, whose budget is huge in begin with, Baker said.

"This is a nonviolent fight," Geneva declared moments after the photos.

"I'm not doing it to compel people, but rather to inspire them. The good news is that so many are going vegetarian because they see the positive effects on their health."

Geneva said she was 15 years old when she thought of killing animals for food for her hard. She was shooting a shampoo commercial at the time in Colorado, Delaware, and had the chance to see wildlife roaming free.

Felt weird

"I felt weird, but in a good way," she said. "Not long after, I told my manager then, Cielbe Narita, that I wanted to eat just vegetables from then on."

This didn't go well with her father, Bayani Cruz, a third-generation member of the famed clan of tenderloins.

"If I went on with it, he said he would make me stop anything," Geneva said. "I couldn't blame him, he just thought I wouldn't get proper nutrition eating only veggies."

So she tried the moderation approach—slowly taking out red meat from her diet, having only fish and chicken along with the greens. Two years ago, she finally went cold turkey, avoiding all kinds of animal products from her diet. She is proud to say that she cooks her own food now.

"I'm into admiring foreplaying and stews; anything with tofu, sometimes baked potato with canola oil, mushrooms, spinach and pepper. I'm also big on brown rice and whole wheat bread," Geneva said, observing that there's a whole, colorful variety to a vegetarian's world.

"She's very passionate about what she says," Arnold Supilla, her new manager, confirmed.

Not for vanity

"I'm not doing this for vanity, please understand," Geneva told the media. "The main issue here is that animals have feelings. None of us would want to get hurt or be tortured ..."

Geneva said she has not imposed the lifestyle on her husband RC Hermes or son Hiromitsu Ilyo Jr.husband Pluto Arespacochaga Jr.

"RC comes from a family of farmers," she explained. "And like RC, Hiromi tells respects my beliefs and decision ... I don't know if he'll go vegetarian soon, but for now he says he still likes to eat meat."

After the photo shoot, meatless merienda were served: what looked like an all-meat lunch pack, but which turned out to be soy-based "pork" barbecue and "chicken" drumsticks.

'Blindness in Pinoys can be avoided'

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

AT LEAST FOUR MILLION FILIPINOS, MOSTly the elderly and the poor, suffer from visual impairment which could have been prevented or remedied had they had access to eye care.

They include at least half a million Filipinos who are blind in both eyes, mostly due to cataracts which are treatable.

In observance of National Sight-Saving Month, eye care experts have urged Filipinos to insist on their "right to sight" and demand that their barangay leaders put up eye care services in the communities.

Dr. Noel Chua, chair of the multisectoral National Committee for Sight Preservation (NCSP), said there were enough ophthalmologists and optometrists in the country but they were concentrated in urban areas.

Medium has-not practicing ophthalmologists who only goes to the island provinces during weekends. Robot also has one ophthalmologist for the entire province.

Chua said the challenge faced by eye health advocates is how to bring affordable and excellent eye care to all areas of the country.

"What we like to refocus on is to challenge our regular citizens at the barangay level to demand from their local government administration that they hire these specialists. We have enough ophthalmologists in the country but not in the places where they are needed most," Chua said.

He said the 11 member-organizations under the NCSP "can provide you with the best eye care at the most affordable rates."

The latest national blindness survey done in 2002 estimated 3.6 million Filipinos were visually impaired. Of these, 1.2 million had visual impairment in one or both eyes, while 561,121 were blind in both eyes.

Reading the results of some survey, Chua estimated that based on a 0.58 percent national prevalence rate, at least 3.9 million Filipinos were today visually impaired.

Majority of them suffer from causes of refraction "which can be easily corrected" with spectacles, he said.

He said an estimated 308,000 Filipinos are blind in both eyes, mainly due to cataracts. Cataracts are the number-one cause of irreversible blindness in the country with prevalence highest among the poor and underserved, Chua said.

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that gradually lead to loss of vision often without warning. Once blindness has set in, it becomes irreversible so early detection is vital. However, this can only be done with highly technological equipment.

This year, the Department of Health and its partner organizations under the NCSP aim to put up local committees for sight preservation around the country.

These committees will be headed by local chief executives and will coordinate the delivery of eye care services such as eye screening and cataract surgery in indigents in hard to reach areas.

The committee will be composed of ophthalmologists, optometrists, rural health care personnel, civic groups and community volunteers.

"The end goal is that eye care services will be integrated into the local health services system," said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

Bastol at the DOH office in Manila, the NCSP is the umbrella organization for 21 agencies of government, the academe, eye care professionals and nongovernmental organizations.

For the this year's Sight-Saving Month with the theme, "Eyesiteseo and Equity in Eye Care: A Human Right," select government and private hospitals will conduct free eye screening and cataract surgery.

"I urge the public to have their eyes checked to prevent blindness," said Duque.

Hospital charges too much

CITY OF SAN FERnando—The Department of Health in Central Luzon issued a series of violations to a private hospital here on Saturday after discovering that its pharmacy had not reduced medicine prices contrary to a new law.

Dr. Rio Magpantay, DOH regional director, cited the Medical Center for noncompliance with Republic Act No. 9502 or the Universally Accessible Cheaper Quality Medicines Act which went into effect on Aug. 15.

"I asked the officer in charge of the hospital why they didn't comply with [RA 9502] and [he] could not answer me," Magpantay said.

The law and Executive Order No. 821 require all drugstores to follow the maximum retail prices for selected drugs set by the DOH. The prices have been slashed by up to 50 percent.

The DOH will seek for an explanation from hospital officials before imposing any disciplinary action, Magpantay said.

"I expect an answer from the hospital," he said.

Officials of the hospital declined to talk to reporters. *Christine Cayabyab, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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OPINION

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Simplicity

EDITORIAL

AFTER THE UPROAR OVER WHAT SOME SECTORS have called "extravagant and ostentatious" spending by government officials on foreign trips, now should be an opportune time to remind them of Republic Act 6713, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Section 4 (h) of RA 6713 says in part that "public officials shall lead modest lives appropriate to their positions and income" and that "they shall not engage in extravagant or ostentatious displays of wealth." It behooves government officials, especially the high-ranking ones, to remember the law because they should lead the nation not just by precept but by example.

Government officials have to remember that they are not the owners but the stewards of public money. They have to spend it wisely and prudently, like any head of a family. They have to have a hierarchy of values, a schedule of priorities and a sense of proportion in the expenditure of public money.

Even when they are spending their personal funds while on a trip abroad, they have to remember that they come from a poor country where the poverty incidence is 26.9 percent and 23.7 percent of households suffer involuntary hunger. It would be the height of insensitivity for them to splurge on luxury hotels and expensive restaurants when millions of their countrymen are not eating and living in hovels.

We are not saying that the President, Cabinet members and members of Congress should just eat at a hamburger or hot dog stand or stay in floating hotels while abroad. After all, they represent the Philippines while they are abroad and they have to stay in respectable hotels and eat at the better restaurants and not just cafeterias. But certainly they should not choose to stay in expensive five-star hotels and dine in the classiest restaurants.

The wise and prudent expenditure of public funds is not just a matter of following the letter and spirit of the law. It is not just a matter of scrimping on government funds at a time of a global and national economic crunch. It is also a matter of ethical concerns.

Perhaps government officials should remember the example of former Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew of Singapore, one of the richest countries in Asia, who came to the Philippines many years ago with his wife and a few aides aboard a commercial jet. Taking a commercial airline did not diminish his stature as a leader in Asia. If anything, it impressed many people that the leader of a rich nation had the humility and practical good sense to travel aboard a commercial airline and eat in a private jet.

And why can't our government officials follow the example of the late former President Corazon Aquino, member of an old rich clan, who practiced voluntary simplicity and kept government spending on presidential trips at a minimum? At a time like this, when the plight of millions of Filipinos has been exacerbated by a global economic downturn, government officials have to set the example in austerity and voluntary simplicity.

Poisonous politics

FOREIGN COMMENT

YOU WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT BILL CLINTON GETTING two American ones out of a tough jam in North Korea would be universally received as a good thing.

You'd at least be wrong.

Critics in the United States have been themselves from here to Pyongyang and back to criticize the whole thing.

The Obama administration, which negotiated the release and sanctioned the trip by Clinton Clinton, surely to avoided North Korea's bad behavior, setting a test with president, they say.

Or the trip was really about Bill Clinton rewarding himself once so Obama administration

Or surely Clinton's discussion with Kim Jong-Il must have strayed into areas that compromised official US diplomatic policy toward North Korea, despite White House insistence to the contrary.

Or the stage managing of the return of the plane carrying Clinton, Laura Ling and Euna Lee was unseemly.

The manufactured kerfuffle over Clinton's humanitarian trip shows just how poisonous our politics have become. It's in danger of being all partisan, all of the time. ...

The critics are wrong. Inclined to its essentials, the deal secured the release of two American citizens from a hellish hole at the cost of a photo op. That's solid diplomacy in the service of a limited, but humanitarian, outcome. And that's a good thing.

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Mailbox traffic

VIEWPOINT

Jose L. Mercado

ITS BE "UNAMBLESS" FOR JOSEPH ESTRADA to seek the presidency again, a think that Mel Stallings from New York. Raised in Lapu-Lapu City, Pending boy retired in Yonkers.

"Practically all adult Filipinos know who 'Erap' Estrada is, what and how he did as president, how he debauched that office, how he ended up a felon, and how he got 'pardoned,' as clearly in 'Poe Modern's parables.' (Newspaper, 8/12/09).

"This is a case who, if he had a shred of decency or pride or moral scruples left in him, should have gone into exile. But, no, he plans to run for the office of president again for second time! (Palpitations in stomach.) Oh, my God! He might still make it the second time around."

From San Diego, California, Thomas Leto sent Estrada "can redeem himself if he runs a second time—for."

Leto's mother is a Filipina, his father is an Italian-American. He lived in the Visayas from age 7. He worked here when Fidel Ramos was president. Now, he's in for the second "redeemed-time."

"I was no fan of Estrada during his time as vice president," Leto wrote. "But I understood his serious loss: the context of admiration his Ronald Reagan as his inspiration to be president. Actor. Raised in the province. I don't have the big-city dismissive attitude toward the unwashed. I identified with them when they voted for Estrada. For votes, they had a candidate they could connect to.

"And Estrada betrayed them.

"I wrote Estrada and family to visit the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Los Angeles. See his heroic's legacy and be inspired. If elevated a second time, he could also be the hero!! And perhaps get a standard for generations, just like he did."

From Washington and Virginia, seasoned journalists e-mailed on their memories of covering Estrada "President's raucous regime.

"I felt Cory's passing as a personal loss," wrote Eddie Lachica, formerly of the Wall Street Journal. He wrote for the Philippine Herald and became a Bureau fellow at Harvard University. After a stint with OEPF/Japan in Tokyo, he signed on with Wall Street Journal as Washington bureau.

"In January of her final year in office, I called on her in Malacañang. '357 days left,' Arroyo. She was counting the days when she could leave office.

"She once told me her goal as president was to make sure that in other women would ever have to go through what she went through when Nancy was jailed after Marcos imposed martial law. That goal she achieved.

From Daraga City, Roman Ramos Guerrero raised two questions for Erap: (a) "Did you wonder why Mrs. Arroyo will have stayed in Malacañang close to nine and a half years by next June (6/30/10 not counted earlier, a directly elected official like you could serve only stayed six years, no reelection.", and (b) "Are you not scared of a possible easter a second time?"

Guerrero notes that is directly elected president gets a six year, no reelection limit. But the successor ever president is not entitled a possible 10-year stay as president. Hmm! By eating cheat, by as much as four years, the six-year term of the sitting president. (Ms Arroyo assumed by close to three and a half years following's term in Jan. 20, 2001.)

This is "bizarre, risky and dangerous," Guerrero says.

The culprit is Article VII, Section 4(1), which states: "No person who has succeeded as President and has served as such for more than four years shall be qualified for election to the same office at any time." The term applies only to one who served as president for "more than four years." But not for one who served as president "exactly four years or less."

In one who succeeds and served as president for 44 months or less qualify for election to the presidency while acting in office as president? This was the case of Ms Arroyo in 2004.

"What is even more unbelievable is that not one of the numerous 'constitutionalists' have raised this concern," says Guerrero. "Our people's resistance and a referendum do that before the May 2010 elections!"

E-mail: jsmlitecoll@gmail.com

Objections

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SINCE I WROTE THOSE COLUMNS ON Noynoy for president, I've gotten a lot of kind feedback, positive and positive. Curiously, what are pointed at his weaknesses I find to be his strengths.

The first is that he hasn't made up his mind and indeed shows the greatest reluctance to run for president. Well, there's my proof he's the president I want. It is entirely when everyone's not out one I'm known again McKinley scientific terms to do so, some of them even handing out campaign paraphernalia in the middle of it. Instead, that's a breath of fresh air in a stale room. That shows the opposite kind of "presidentialism" (in the sense 1935 puts them) — Erap, Manuel Pillas, Cito Beaudoin, Nick de Castro, Mar Roxas, Loren Legarda...and see who's not so.

The best person to entrust power to is the one least tempted by it. Only Frodo the Hobbit could have carried out the destruction of the One Ring of Power. Not Gandolf the Wizard, not Aragorn the King, not Legolas the Elf, not Gimli the Dwarf, not any of the magical creatures that inhabited Middle Earth. And remember how Arthur became king. His half-brother, Sir Kay, had the honor to marry up the sword in a stone and had once him back to check it. But the place was locked, everyone having gone to see the joust. To make sure his brother had a sword, he pulled out the sword in the stone. A thing nobody else could do.

That's how people rule out to be true heroes, kings and presidents. By not seeking one to be so.

The second is that Noynoy for president will mock the unity of the opposition. It's tempting to say "What unity?" because if there's any, Noynoy destroyed it when he, it's not only it's Dictionnaires. Much of the delight in the non-president is Malacañang. Irony can run only on principle, not on ambition. Again the thing that comes to mind is Guy Lazard going way to Cory electing the coup de'etats. What's to only he is remembered today.

But the real question is not "What unity?" but "What opposition?" The only thing most of the "presidentiables," if not indeed all of them, are opposed to is the opposite thought that they are not yet president. Opposition is based on initiatives, not on opportunity. Noynoy represents the opposite of presidentialism. Noynoy is the title of food in the great fight between Food and Evil. People Power, which arose from the dead the other week, has made it so.

The third is that he hasn't done much as a senator. Well, who has among the "presidentiables"? Not while or this. Noynoy hasn't stolen, other than the heart of a young lass from Bulacan. He hasn't lied, other than to himself when he says himself unworthy. And he hasn't murdered, other than the initiation to abuse that prominence he is here to. In a time of widespread wickedness, doing the right thing is a heroic act.

More than that, I'm looking at Noynoy not for what he was but what he can be. Thirst into the manifestation of history some people accept them as they will. Noynoy did so when his mother died, showing grace and courage worthy of her parents. I repeat what I said the last time: He will be a good president because he has no desire. His legacy weighs on him like the Powers of Gods. Intimidating mongdoing can paste of hell in this life as much as the next. Who among the other "presidentiables"—Erap, Manny Dan, Mar, Mar and Loren...can say that?

The fourth, which follows from the third, is that he's better off running as vice president. Not now. He must first VP, and both he and his presidential partner lose. He runs for president and both he and his vice presidential partner win. People Power is a heroic force that requires a heroic project. Running for the vice presidency is not a heroic project. Running for the vice presidency with Senator Panfilo Lacson, running for the presidency unbeatable it.

The fifth is that People Power might not be there for him. Well, it certainly won't be there for anybody else. It's unbelievable at all, it's fantastic—only to him, not to anybody else. But I personally do not think that People Power that arose like a storm on a stormy day the other week will dissipate so easily. That is so because the conditions that resurrected it are still there. It wasn't just love for Cory that roused it, it was also hatred for the opposite of Cory. Good versus Evil. That opposition is still there, heightened by the day with new additions to Evil in the form of insatiable profligacy. Noynoy makes new additions to Good and he can be the opposite of Gloria, with People Power to lend him up.

More than that, the opposite isn't just whether People Power will be there for Noynoy, the question is whether Noynoy will be there for People Power. The relationship is symbiotic and self-reinforcing. It's not just that People Power will sustain Noynoy if he runs, it's that Noynoy will sustain People Power if he runs. People Power needs a name to wrap itself around, or it only could dissipate. Noynoy's running for president is that name. A startling, hope-generating, climate-working name.

At the very least, Noynoy is the only one People Power will be there for if he is elected in the elections, which is almost a given with the kind of automation the Comelec hasn't. Ask yourself: Will you take to the streets like a fiend, as we saw when Cory was kicked out, for Erap? For Manny? For Chiz? For Jejomar? For Mar? For Loren? One is well and need to declare a holiday to persuade people to watch a movie.

The last objection to Noynoy running for president is that he isn't married, which is the only moral objection of those who want to become presidents of the country.

What can I say? That one only make all married persons vote for him.

Purchase of plane planned since FVR's time

Hold-up

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

PERHAPS THE TIMING OF NINOY ROXAS'S short trip under his e-zero presidency at war icons, after the bulletholes over capricious illness-to-New York and Washington, D.C., for President Macapagal-Arroyo and partly during his recent official visit to the United States, that is, first-time in his Palmy, the Philippine Air Force Museum which is home to the old aircraft being used as presidential planes, has been recommending that purchase for nearly 20 years. In fact, an order has been pending since President Fidel V. Ramos' time. Actually it was meant to buy a new plane not to sell the older both in terms of physical facility and national security, and also cheaper than renting or chartering. But after the bombshell over the $32,000 dinner, the purchase of the Boeing 737 is now a hot potato.

The dinner controversy reminds me of the predicament of tourists abroad. A long time ago, when I first took my family to Europe I told them to avoid packing in a front of the streets, but to shop duty. The two times relatives volunteered to accompany us shopping, they ended up admonishing me, "Stop converting dollars or euros into pesos or it could ruin your holiday." There has been no official conversion of the $32,000 dinner, the purchase of the Beechcraft 1900 Airliner Class C.

At age 15, when most schoolgirls think mainly of crushes and sleep-over parties, Lucile Custodio already began her theater career with the Bandanera Players. Until the 1950s, a time of martial law and dance-band engagements with debate assistance, Cecile produced and directed-in a few drama series, "Dramagen," as an antidote to juvenile delinquency, reclaiming students from both private and public schools to the streets as well as dropouts. Assistant Artur Alejandro Bocos, in a recent column, recalled how Fr. James Reuter, SJ wrote him to introduce a young lady actress he dubbed as "Electricity on stage." Then acting in the "TV Family Theater" he produced. Bocos noted how he auditioned to get invites from Cecile, by then as a US drama scholarship, and "they were all about what was wrong with the Philippine theater and what she learned about it when she went back." After her return in 1965, she cleared all her plans with Bocos, who tried to give her a reality check. Instead of being discouraged, she organized Fine Arts, national convention of the Philippine Educational Theater Association (Peta) in Manila. Guest speaker Bocos was so surprised to find the place packed and told Cecile, "Mr. Custodio's teenage, our idea of the son of contemporary thought, concepts and beliefs." Not only did it become the birth month of so many talents later to draw on their own, it created a theater group that was the first to tour Asia. The next on is found "Studio Publication," which became the operating ground of other talents, including Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal. In the midst of the Marcos dictatorship, she and husband Hermogenes Moreno moved to the United States, where she founded the International Alliance of Concerned Artists for Human Rights and Bocos, while he joined the US Congress in supplying military aid to Marcos. She used frozen cash out to Filipino communities overseas, overseeing training, production services and cultural festivals that focused on the Filipino struggle for national identity and freedom. Columnist Chit Nolledo, another former exile based in London, recalled how she, at a late, to how to bring young Filipino artists and Filipino cultures in line to Circle in New York where she ran such a program for Pinoy children growing abroad, in cooperation with the La Mama Theater group.

In later years, Cecile founded the Earthbinary Movement with her husband as well as the Earthbinary Oratorio Ensemble, which mobilized young people in various stages of physical disability to perform a dance-based music that flopped the Asian Artist Award from the Unesco. She also received "Gawad Balintatakan" and put up "Sining Giting" on MMA, as a vehicle for keeping PE-duc alive for the people's empowerment.

Running through her long list of achievements and awards is a common thread: challenges, such as criticisms and the brutal censorship that confronted her six years ago, only spurred her on to greater heights. Her current project is the Bantayan Cory Benevolent, built by the Aquino-Cojuangco clan. Pete has grown into a huge tree from which many local theater groups have sprouted.

National Artist Virgilio Almario was quoted as saying that he marveled at Cecile's ability to persuade withdrawn the National Artist Award from Cecile and "humble king" Carlo Caparas. Well, he'll have to remake simplicio in Manila while Cecile design second, knowing that she fully deserves it. [mail@belindacunanan.com]

Reminder: Nationwide, the international Catholic ministry devoted to helping troubled marriages, will conduct a weekend retreat for couples from Thursday evening, Aug. 22, up to Sunday afternoon at the Shalom of Mercy Spiritual Center on Old Road, Tagaytay City. Interestingly, led by Fr. Leon Dag, his helped many couples with ailing marriages to reclaim their love once each other through the Sacrament. Weekend and follow-up sessions. Call Father Leo (0918-9020511 and 525-8088, Malou 908-5775 or 0920-442-8080, Sonia at 585-5746 or 0908-205-8442. All calls held in strictest confidence.

Deciding to save our mothers

At Large

Rina Jimenez-David

ARE WOMEN PURPOSELY SAVING UP TO DIE, the answer is yes. But if we valued our women—mothers, sisters, wives, daughters—as much as we do our children, if we valued their lives as much as we do the lives of those we really pay considerable sums, to ensure that already have solutions—cheap and available solutions, at that!

The answer may be in what Dr. Mahmoud Fathalla, who was the 2009 UN Population Award, said recently: "Women are not dying of diseases we can cure. They are dying because societies have yet to make the decision that their lives are worth saving."

Many women do know how to prevent women from dying, specifically from dying due to causes related to pregnancy and child birth, then why don't we do it? How especially why aren't governments making sure that women have access, universally to end the scourge of maternal deaths? In the Philippines, 11 women die each day while having—with child or while delivering their babies.

The media make much of sudden deaths in entertainment—celebrities, or villains—in road and air accidents or in natural disasters. And yet, the real "massacre" of women, one that takes place in every day, known to everyone in the community, is the slow, agonizing death of women who bleed excessively during childbirth, or who suffer infection and mortality in a dirty setting—and it is indeed a shameful statistic, when it is high. Experts say that a country's maternal mortality rate—any death of a woman while giving birth—is an indicator of its overall health performance. Therefore, governments cannot save the lives and preserve the health of its mothers, chances are it cannot meet the health needs of the rest of its population either.

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QUITE telling at the recent Asia and the Pacific Regional Consultation on Maternal Health and Rights was the list of countries not included among the participants. Sri Lanka was represented by its health minister, and there was also an representative from China, Japan, Korea, Singapore or Malaysia. There are countries which have already achieved an enviable maternal mortality rate, in double- or single-digits, compared to the 300/100K in the Philippines and 1,000/100K in Afghanistan.

Sri Lanka was present only to serve as an example of a "low resource" country that was able to bring down the number of maternal deaths. But of "political will," ensuring resources mainly to the training of midwives, deploying them to villages, and giving them all the necessary support they need, which from antibiotics, supplies and facilities, and even family planning medicines.

For the truth is that, without a rational and efficient family planning program, it will be difficult for any country to significantly reduce its maternal mortality rate. Women will have no choice if, when and how often to get pregnant, women are doomed to risking their lives in high-risk pregnancies even when they don't want to get pregnant, which is why 1 in 10 pregnancies in the country are unplanned, and unwanted, or even fatal pregnancies.

Our church's distance against it, frame 31 percent of maternal deaths that already are due due to domestic violence, with women battered and abused even while they are pregnant, the grossly badly fund program for the elderly vulnerabilities other triggering choices behavior.

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IN RESPONSE to the problem of maternal mortality, the Department of Health has already issued Administrative Order 2008-0029, the "Guidelines and Standards" (MNCHN), requiring, among other things, that women give birth in facilities where they can be assisted by trained attendants.

The policy also directs that facilities able to provide emergency obstetric care be set up in every municipality, city or province.

But even with all good intentions, problems continue to haunt the DOH in the implementation of the MNCHN. One is that the majority of births in the Philippines still take place in the home, and not in facilities, with the figure as high as 60 percent in some areas (though not always unskilled) village attendants. The trouble is that when an emergency arises—as when bleeding occurs, or an obstruction of labor commences—it takes many precious minutes, even hours, for the mother to be transported to a clinic or hospital, as she may have difficulty finding a means of transportation.

Dr. Aimee Belgar of the NGO Likhaan said one reason mothers prefer giving birth at home despite the risks is the fear of home "bills" they are thrown at or intimidated. They are also frightened by a worsen of care—the bilas or midwife, her own mother and other female relatives—who cares to her every need and lower over her ready to do her bidding.

Belgar says that if mothers are encouraged to go to a hospital, clinic or health center, they feel "ignored or put upon," said Belgar. They are shooed at, pushed around, even scolded if they have been there too often. And given how public hospitals are run, there is no privacy, cooperation and labor is presumed. It's doubtful if mothers would receive quality and compassionate care.

• • •

THAT'S why maternal health is as much a human rights issue as one advocating and torture. A woman not only has the right to optimal health and health care, she also has the right to a safe and protected pregnancy and delivery.

But the health system must also provide the wherewithal if and when she will get pregnant, and the level of care she will receive during pregnancy and delivery, and in the period shortly after.

Many women die because they don't have the money to pay for hospital bills, or the means to get to a hospital, time

No justification at all

LETTERS

"THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALLEVIATING the common good, besides falling to individual persons, belongs also to the State, since the common good is the reason (for) the state's existence," (No. 168, Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church)

Malacañang spokesperson resorting called defending the Aquinas's cluster Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said her cohorts had all to Caagay. They describe the crime as a "simple theme" for a president. But on the other hand, they have accused the media and various organizations of using it to agitate the people.

It's very unfortunate that while many Filipinos are suffering from hunger and poverty, their leaders are having a "simple dinner" that costs a million pesos. And while about 19 million Filipinos are pushed to work in other countries, risking their lives and sacrificing a lot for their families, their leaders live it up abroad. How these "leaders" were able to afford such extravagance, only their sense of conscientiousness knows.

These leaders have developed the ability to justify government lapses and lavishness and their spokespersons and lackeys only espouse here to announce and complain, do not worry. They have turned their officers into the country's information laboratories and presidential mouthpieces.

The social teachings of the church are clear. The responsibility of state authorities is to attain the common good at all times. Regardless of whoever presides over a particular country, government officials must at all times think of the common good of the people. There is no justification for a government official's acceptance of a favor or payment for a house-and-lot-cluster such great as this since he or she has no reason for their existence as authorities.

—NARDO CARINO,
secretary general,
Promotion of Church
Social Teachings,
pcpcsoff@ymail.com

Clarifying 'Bagnio's object lesson'

THIS IS IN REACTION TO IBNA Jimenez-Daniels' July 15 column titled "Bagnio's object lesson, Jr."

It is true that sometime in July 2008, God who is a powerful God in action, spoke to me through his prophet in our church. He showed me, in symbol and in a very evocative, to look for a mountain in Baguio City to be made into a "Prayer Mountain" and with it make Baguio a spiritual city aside from being a tourism and cultural city.

When we found the right place (Dominican Hill), we initiated fund-raising. 2011 + 2012 were targeting President Macapagal-Arroyo that the ownership of the property be shall now experienced under the name of the Ministry of Basic northernmost and under the care of the Presidential Management Staff (PMS), to transferred to Baguio City. The President approved the request in 2010 and the title to the property was transferred accordingly in 2006.

The city government started fencing the property with concrete hollow blocks, and then converted the surroundings of the building, opening PICE million. More improvements were undertaken.

The 13 hectare property is envisioned to be developed as a tourism, cultural and spiritual center that all people to and outside the Philippines can visit. Part of the building is now being used for prayer gatherings and for evangelization of people groups from the city and other parts of the country.

Sometime in the latter part of 2006, the Baguio Reforested and Mining Mission (BRMM) met with the city council and asked for a lot, preferably located in Dominican Park. In response, the council allocated 1,000 square meters of the Dominican Hill property because it was not possible for the city to provide foundation space in the Mines Park.

Then BRMM, probably upon seeing the ruggedness and damaged building, told the council that they had changed their whole building. They were used to Malacañang using their influence and threatened the city council that they would acquire the land (through the PMS). It is hoped that the members of the city council will remain calm and refuse to be coerced by the pressure-duress. If developed in a spirited and trusted manner, the lure is yet to come to that place.

We recommended the county in the vision in Baguio, Benguet as the best and most practical area like the one in Daebeck City in Korea for a mining museum. We are praying that the foundation officials reminds ourselves fully their project so as to foster and stability and social acceptability.

—CALEB O. NOTEBOOK, CPA,
vice-consultant,
Office of the Congressman,
Pantawid-pamilyang Pilipino Council,
Baguio City

Martial law today a 'toothless tiger'

FORMER DEFENSE SECRETARY Avelino Cruz Jr. warned about a declaring politics drawing that President Macapagal-Arroyo might proclaimed Martial Law upon Cagayan's winning reelection bid.

public concern about the possible declaration of martial law before the elections in May 2010 as a way of canceling Gloria win in Mabalacat, beyond her constituency (Pampanga, Cruz, (AMA) said more such "because, "It's not true.

There is a great difference between martial law as allowed under the 1935 Constitution and martial law under the 1987 Constitution. In the former, martial law was a "one-man rule"—the president. In the latter, martial law was a "collegial" body, composed of the president, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chief Justice and the members of the Supreme Court. Under the 1987 Constitution, martial law is a toothless tiger.

However, in the 1987 Constitution, martial law is allowed under the following conditions: (1) There must be an invasion or rebellion; (2) public safety requires it; and (3) the President must declare martial law but Congress will have to determine whether the declaration is justified or not; even if justified, martial law will last for 60 days only, the civil courts are open and the Constitution remains in force.

In other words, martial law is due to a "toothless tiger." So, why declare martial law at all?

—ELISEO M. PASTORIN,
Barangka Ilaya,
Concepcion I, Marikina City

A SCENE from the biggest funeral of the 21st century

A hero's life is a catalyst that touches the inner core

A HERO'S LIFE IS BEYOND BY-PRODUCT—appears noted in details. His voice is seldom heard by his people and it becomes his last. Then a whole nation in grief and strength.

A hero tells us how an opposed to not a message that inspires but is the action. Heroes are not to a fanatics, helpless nonstrategy under "opposition," finally, though, it is only in death that a hero's prophetic life and sacrifices are usually made known, and he cannot act silently under but by the same people he rallies: he dedicated his all to the very last drop of his blood, in order to offer lovers of the past.

Cornelio Gonzaga-Aquino is one such person, a great moderator here for every Filipino. A gift from heaven. She lived and died and once again is only forever on our hearts.

To Cory: Thank you so much, but you may "goodbye"!

—RENE M. VALENCIA,
reneemvalencia@ymail.com

Is gov't against use of flush toilets in elementary schools?

IN REACTION TO A. G. HARBOR letter ("China school toilets teach water conservation," 7/26/10), we would like to share a recent experience we had with our classrooms building project in the Philippines.

Our association, Bond the Hungry, Inc. (BHI) of Washington, D.C., has donated 60 classrooms to different schools throughout the Philippines since 2003. There are more classrooms scheduled for construction as soon as possible, the latest being the classroom for physically challenged students in Cadiz, Negros Occidental.

In project, DPD standard classroom has a ceramic floor, tiled walls, a flush toilet with water and toilet paper holder, a sink basin, electrical outlets and lights, and a water supply (see July 23, we received an official communication from the Philippine government agency informing us that no part use the classrooms housing any of our donations are constructed because of toilet bowls with flushing mechanisms as it might not be properly maintained by the school.

It appears that while DOE is trying to upgrade the toilet systems in elementary schools to drive awareness that there is such a plumbing system for flush toilets, there are public schools that are still trying to discourage its use, such an attitude is not highly educated people to very discouraging. Instead of finding a solution to properly maintain a flush toilet, they would rather not use it to avoid the responsibility of maintaining it.

We need officials with the right attitude to lead the students on the right direction.

—PABLITO J. MARCOS
Pan Pilipino Foreign, Inc.
#110 Dalton Pin. Dr.
Leesburg, O/20176

PITC

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS BRAND NEW AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES

(Bid Ref No. 2009 – 001)

1. The Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), Philippine Arms Plaza, intends to apply the sum of [illegible] being the cost of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS BRAND NEW AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES:

Item	Quantity Required	Description	ABC Estimate, Pesos (Basis: 2010)	Funding Source	Bid Security Type, % (5%)	Bid Security Form (Surety Bond, Cashier's/Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee)	Bid Security per Unit Quantity/Item (5-10%)	Cost of Bid Documents
1	1,500,000	7.62 x 51mm Ball M80	45,000,000.00	GOP	5%	Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee	1,500,000.00	40,000.00
2	10,000	Cartridge, 25mm HEI, Dual Purpose, for 25mm dual mount vehicles	24,000,000.00	GOP	5%	Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee	1,000,000.00	20,000.00
Total			[illegible]		[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]

"Only those cleared by Solemn Vow of commercial or personal bank"

2. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected without opening.

3. PITC and PNP now invite duly licensed bidders for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS BRAND NEW AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES (2009/10). Delivery of the GOODS is required within Ninety (90) calendar days from receipt of Notice to Proceed (NTP) from the opening of bids. Bidders interested may obtain the description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section 4 of the Bidding Documents. Interested bidders to Bidders to obtain their Bid (BDS).

4. Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

5. The bidding is open only to Local and Foreign manufacturers. However, Foreign manufacturers must be represented by a Philippine based corporation with at least one (1) year experience in the importation or supply of firearms and ammunition, duly authorized by the manufacturer to participate in the bidding for the subject contract and submit the bid, which must be duly licensed by the Philippine National Police (PNP).

6. Only bids from bidders who meet the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section 4 of the Bidding Documents. Instructions to Bidder (ITB)(BDS). The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall be subjected to the post-qualification process in Section 5 of the Bidding Documents. The bidder that has the lowest technically responsive bid will be declared the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined to satisfy the Bidding Documentation process.

7. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Secretariat of the Bids, Awards Meeting at the 5th Building, 710 Tomarahan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday starting August 10, 2009.

8. Bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of [illegible]. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his duly authorized representative.

9. PITC Bids Committee or Pre-Bid Conference shall be held (interested) bidders on August 27, 2009 at 09:00 AM in the Building, 710 Tomarahan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City.

10. Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted at the designated bid box located on PITC Lobby, 5th Building, 710 Tomarahan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City on or before September 7, 2009 at 10:00. Late bids shall not be accepted.

11. Bid opening shall be on September 7, 2009 at 10:00 AM at 5th Building, 710 Tomarahan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who presents letters of authority and identification cards from their companies. Only members of the BAC, Secretariat through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) and other than the bidders or their duly authorized representatives shall be allowed to attend the opening of bids.

12. PITC reserves the rights to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to accept all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders. Any unsuccessful bidder may withdraw its bid before the opening of bids.

(Sgd.) MA. VICTORIA G. BARCARSE
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee I

Bidding on August 10 – 17, 2009
DAILY TRIBUNE
DAILY BALITA
[illegible]

Lani's appointment to SMC a mockery of coconut farmers

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE NEWS item titled, "Lani capable of doing SMC job, says Bong" (Inquirer, 8/1/10), referring to the appointment of Lani Mercado to government nominees to the boards of directors of San Miguel Corp. (SMC).

If we remember correctly the main bone of the issues lashed to recover the coconut levy recovery came through an executive screening process by the President's Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG). The coco levy recovery was created by then-PCGG chairwoman Sonia. The executive screening was done to identify who among the farmers qualified to receive the coconut levy and would be able to speak for or defend the interests of the coconut farmers. This was ensured in the appointments to the boards of the CIIF and UCPB. The selection process were intended to ensure consultation with the coconut farmers. After all...it is [illegible] for government to appoint individuals who would advance the interests and protect the welfare of coconut farmers and farmworkers.

Thus, we were shocked by the appointment of Ms. Mercado to SMC.

Ms. Malacañang gone mad? What role does Malacañang see that it would even go to the extent of appointing a stranger to the board of SMC? Please tell us. Mercado knows about the struggle to recover the coco levy? Should she be able or even willing to understand the interests of the small coconut farmers? Whom does she actually represent? What is the real purpose of her appointment to the SMC board? Is the appointment indicative of the level of seriousness with which the administration is pursuing the full recovery of the coconut levy funds?

Equally alarming is the statement made by an anonymous PCGG official. Apparently the PCGG now "[illegible] whoever is in the driver's seat" of Malacañang, even without the benefit of ascertaining whether such nominees would represent, promote and protect the coconut farmers and farmworkers. The PCGG official has transformed into a blind follower of manipulating. This was unthinkable during the term of Ms. Sonia.

The small coconut farmers and farmworkers have been struggling for more than 25 years to fully recover the coconut levy funds. Their interests have, time and again, been subjected to compromises and political accommodations. The appointment of Ms. Mercado to the board of the SMC seems to be another indication that the administration has turned its back on the coconut farmers.

—MIGUEL M. ENRIQUEZ,
pinoy.success@yahoo.com,
Cavite, Philippines,
Tel. 321 9182...
[illegible] with fax... Diliman, QC

Republic of the Philippines
Re-Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Supply and Delivery of Two (2) Units of 1.5 MW/MVA x 10% Portable Diesel Powered Generating Sets
(Project Eligible Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant, (T) 2009

1. PITC now invites duly licensed Filipino bidders for the above supply.

Work	Pakyawan Mix	Technical Specifications	Delivery Schedule	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) Inclusive of Maximum Loading Capacity	Pre-Bid Conference	Bidding Date, Time and Venue
Supply of 1.5 MW	Two (2) units 1.5 MW/MVA 10% Portable Diesel Engine Generating Sets	1. 1500 kW/1875 kVA Prime Rating 2. 1.5 MW/MVA 3. 10% Portable 4. 60 Hz 5. 3 Phase 6. 480 Volts 7. 0.8 PF (Lag) 8. Diesel Engine Driven 9. Synchronizing Panel 10. Complete with Accessories	Within Ninety (90) calendar days from receipt of Notice to Proceed (NTP)	Php 30,000,000.00 inclusive of Maximum Loading Capacity	August 25, 2009 @ 10:00 a.m. at the PITC Conference Room	September 8, 2009 @ 10:00 a.m. at the PITC Conference Room

Refer to the Bidding Documents for Technical Details.

2. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in Republic Act 9184.

3. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased from the address below upon payment of a non-refundable fee at PHILCOA per prescribed price. Bidder must be a registered contractor. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his duly authorized representative.

4. Bidders with outstanding accounts with PITC are advised to fully settle their financial obligations prior to purchase of Bidding Documents.

5. Bidders are encouraged to submit Eligibility Documents on or before August 25, 2009 corresponding to Phase I evaluation. Pre-PITC Bids and Awards Committee. Complete prospective bidders should register with Private Placement and pay the corresponding Certificate of Registration.

6. All duly licensed corresponding to the bidding only to the bidders and proceed subject to the bidding documents. Late bids shall not be accepted.

7. PITC reserves the rights to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders. Any unsuccessful bidder may withdraw its bid before the opening of bids.

8. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE Building, Philippine Arms Plaza, Quezon City and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday starting August 10, 2009.

(Sgd.) MA. VICTORIA G. BARCARSE
Vice Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

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Across the NATION

MNLF men occupy 2 Palawan villages

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—ARMED MEN believed to be members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) have been occupying at least two remote villages in Balabac, Palawan's southernmost municipality since Sunday, prompting about 1,000 residents to flee to a nearby island and other outlying areas.

Tension has gripped the villages following the reported harassment activities by the MNLF members.

Brig. Gen. Bernardo Perez, Western Command (Wescom) chief, confirmed the reported MNLF presence in a radio interview.

Perez said some troops had been sent to Balabac and were awaiting orders to engage MNLF members who were occupying businessmen and taking hostages.

The evacuees from Sitios Bilaukawa and Matandoni in Barangay Candaquan asked Monday for local relief here in local authorities.

Gloria Mora, one of the evacuees interviewed by mobile phone by the INQUIRER, said the adult and other residents were forced to flee their homes after 11 MNLF members led by Commander Alfad Majid emerged down on their village and threatened to burn them if they opposed their presence in police.

"We left because they told us they would attack us for reporting their presence to the authorities," Mora said in the evacuation.

The Wescom, which oversees security operations in the region, declined to issue a statement. It said it was verifying the information.

"We don't have final. The major [of Balabac] has sent us two ranks of text and it has not yet arrived," Mora said.

The evacuees learned that provincial officials led by Gov. Joel T. Reyes were holding a security meeting on Monday morning with local defense officials.

No official statement on the results of the meeting had been released so far.

Rolando Bernan, provincial information officer, said a relief and medical mission had been dispatched to Balabac.

"In fact na we know, our social heroes have coordinated off the target areas and things are under control," Bernan said.

Mora said the armed men in Bodiard (Bataraza) are MNLF members and had been frequently roaming the villages.

"There were usually around eight of them, all with guns. When we decided to report this to the Balabac police, they got mad at us," she said.

Southern Mindoro, according to earlier security briefings conducted by the Wescom, is known to be a hotbed of the MNLF. Redberger Ando, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Among Ed voters help in recount

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Ranged against a losing gubernatorial candidate who has chalked out P9.4 million to fund the recount of her votes, some voters in Pampanga have begun raising money to pay the transportation of evacuees to guard the votes they gave to Gov. Eddie Panlilio.

The Pampanga Christian Workers Council (PCWC) has created P125,000-volume counting fund-raising drive on Saturday. PCWC minister-helper Pastor Joy Pangco said in a statement.

In an interview on Monday, Pangco said the PCWC decided to help because Panlilio, with his 150,000-member salary does not have enough money to fund the recount that is being done at the instance of his closest rival, former Board Member Lilia Pineda.

A Catholic priest for 26 years before he entered politics in 2007, Panlilio's net worth is only P7,200,000, according to his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth.

Fundraising

Pangco said the fundraising drive, dubbed "Vox-pitong-isang pun sa recount," uses P1 as an endearment.

Saturday's collection was pushed in by young and old members of 34 ministerial fellowships, she said.

She has informed Panlilio about the turnover of the amounts, which is kept in PCWC's savings account, she said.

One of the governor's three volunteer lawyers, Ernesto Francisco Jr., said while Pineda has hired 42 revisors for the two shifts, Panlilio has only 21 revisors.

Each of Pineda's revisors is paid P1,000 daily while those revising for Panlilio gets half only of the amount plus P50 for food allowance.

In a telephone interview on Monday, Pineda said she was spending her income from various businesses to fund the recount.

"I only want to know the truth if ballots with my name, 'Vinny Baby,' were counted [and credited] to me," she told the inquirer.

She denied reports that claimed the alleged that Panlilio concealed vote-buying, padding and dawning and used fake ballots.

Integrity

These allegations, however, were cited in her election protest that the Supreme Court decided upon last month.

Pangco said she was taking this step for another church-in-the-vicinity.

"When we voted for Among [Ed] Inf, it was a step to bring back dignity in our province and the Kapampangan," Pangco said.

The Kapampangan Christian Brethren Coalition has not a one-to-one endorsement in the Commission on Elections office in Manila on Aug. 22 to express indignation to what it calls "sham recount."

KCB spokesperson Amel Shim-Ito said while they doubted the integrity of the recount process, they have chosen to remain neutral in the process. Exactly Orden, Inquirer Central Luzon

TORNADO AFTERMATH
The roof of a warehouse was destroyed when a tornado hit Barangay Tabi, Bulgarino, Bataan, yesterday

Guimaras oil spill felt 3 years after, studies show

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE ADVERSE effects of the massive oil spill that damaged the island-province of Guimaras still linger three years after the calamity, studies by scientists showed.

Seven separate studies conducted mainly by scientists from the Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology (ISSM) of the University of the Philippines have bolstered conclusions that the Guimaras coastal environment has not completely healed, according to Dr. Leonard Jungsoo, ISSM associate professor and Guimaras coordinator on environmental matters.

Jungsoo said the results of the studies on marine plants and animals in the affected areas showed abnormalities that were attributed mainly to the contamination from the oil spill.

The oil spill on Aug. 11, 2006, was considered the country's worst marine disaster and was triggered after the MT Solar 1, chartered by Petron Corp., sank in stormy seas southeast of Guimaras and spilled more than 2.1 million liters of bunker fuel oil, which it was transporting from Bataan to Zamboanga.

A study conducted since July last year by a team led by Dr. Irene Bolton showed that the populations of mangroves and seagrasses declined, especially in the southern part of the island, which was the worst affected by the oil spill.

Shellfish, including snails and slugs, have also declined in population and even disappeared in some areas, according to a study of Dr. Benjamin Vallejo Jr. conducted from 2007 to this year. This was also more evident in the southern part of Guimaras.

A main concern is the impact on the health of residents who have consumed oil-contaminated shellfish. A study conducted by a team headed by Dr. Florita Castillo said there was an urgent need to test for bacterial residues in the species consumed by the population in the affected areas.

Fishing has also declined in the five towns of Guimaras based on fish catch. While overfishing could have caused this situation, the oil spill also contributed to the drop because the mangrove and sea grasses, which were important fish nursery and breeding grounds, were affected.

After three years, the economy of Guimaras has recovered, although it has not reached the pre-oil spill status.

A study headed by Rodelio Subade showed an increase in tourist arrivals in 2008 after registering drops from 2003 to 2007. But tourism revenues continued to decline, which can be attributed to the effects of the global financial crisis.

But most of the fishers surveyed by Subade's study considered themselves worse off after the spill.

Many fishers have had alternative and supplementary livelihood as a coping strategy against the effects of the oil spill, with 53 percent engaging in farming, while another 13 percent turning to hog raising.

Seven percent did carpentry and another 7 percent were into charcoal making.

Subade's study said 14 percent of the fishermen sampled seemed to shift to another livelihood since they now spend more time on other sources of income, aside from fishing or fisheries-dependent livelihood.

This was confirmed by a separate three-year socioeconomic impact study conducted by Arsolel Fernandez of the Central Philippine University Research Center.

Based on a sample of 309 households, Fernandez noted a drop in the mean monthly income of fishermen of the three municipalities, or at its downtime, may ship both fine and tropical-connect," Bangoy said.

Asked what they hoped the ordinance would bring to the city, Bangoy said, "This can also bring about personal change and a sense of well-being."

Tony Apura, a publisher of a local tabloid here, described the measure as "novel, timely and healthy in the light of so many concerns."

"It can also be good for tourism," he said. Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao

2 poor boys with heart illnesses need help

By Dennis Jay Santos
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—JAMES KEVIN Tubon, turned 3 years old on Aug. 13, while fellow Sebastian Tubuan is 8 months old.

The two boys may see live long useless helpers-care cases.

Kevin and Sebastian suffer from congenital heart illness, which is life-threatening.

The condition could be medically corrected but it would be very expensive for their poor parents.

Kevin is the only child of Jaynard and Evangeline Tubon.

At 2 years old, Kevin had been diagnosed with a congenital heart condition.

Even though he and his wife were told that their son would see for long unless he underwent medical procedure, Jaynard pledged to have Kevin undergo an operation.

He worked hard between mat jobs, including driving a "habal-habal," a single motorcycle used to ferry people in upland areas.

"I'm going to find a way so he can be cured and go to school when he grows up," he told his wife.

Jaynard, a devout Catholic, would assist their priest in an altar boy, hoping that God will have more mercy on Kevin.

But on Oct. 3 last year, Jaynard died in a road accident.

Jaynard's relatives pitched in so they could survive the difficulties.

Evangeline also took household jobs for Kevin's medication.

Good Samaritans may contact Lucrecia "Tinding" Sumalpong, a public school teacher and a relative of Jaynard's, at her mobile number 0915-7736431 or visit her at 66 3rd Ave., Bliss District in Tagum City, for inquiries on Kevin's medical condition.

Baby boy Sebastian

The doctor told us that he should undergo the operation by age one," Alvie Tubuan, Sebastian's mother, said.

Alvie said what has been complicating Sebastian's condition is his regular bouts with pneumonia.

His heart, she said, is so weak that he might not be able to take the next battle anymore.

The doctor said Sebastian may appear to be healthy but in reality, his condition is even more dangerous than that of other blue babies," Alvie said.

"His development may stunt and he runs the risk of suffering meningitis or worst, a stroke," she said.

Alvie, 21, said she and her husband Bryan, 26, both work as clerks at a banana plantation in Mabini, Davao del Sur, but even if both of them have income, the total money needed for the operation was not possible for them to raise.

"The doctor advised us to prepare at least P750,000 for Sebastian's operation," Alvie said.

The medicine that the child should take every day is already taking a toll on their finances.

Inquirers on how to help Sebastian should be directed to Alvie through her mobile number 0928-3631152 or her workplace in Davao, Otilio Vinluan, a public school teacher in Digos City at number 0919-7838483.

Spitting banned in Davao City

DAVAO CITY—SPITTING JUST anywhere in the city could now land you in jail.

On Tuesday, the city council passed an ordinance that bans spitting in public places.

The main reason for the passage of the anti-spitting ordinance, the latest in the city's growing list of don and don'ts, is not only to stem the "unsightly habit but to protect the health of the people as well," Councilor Samuel Bangoy, the proponent, said.

The measure is timely because of the A(H1N1) pandemic and other life-threatening diseases, which could be transmitted by airborne particles, Bangoy said.

In adopting the law, Bangoy said they studied the anti-spitting laws that France passed in 1980 and Sweden in 1986.

During that time, the aim was also to control the spread of deadly diseases.

"Many of these diseases can spread by air and spitting," Bangoy who chairs the council's health committee and a cardiologist, said.

"There are people who will spit just anywhere like in malls, cinemas or in public transportation," he said.

Bangoy said people should aim at least to carry a handkerchief or tissue paper or all these because these would be helpful if they could not control spitting.

"You can always use a handkerchief, a napkin and look for a private place to discard your saliva," he said.

He said violators would be fined P1,000 for the first offense, P2,000 for the second offense and P5,000 for the third offense.

"In case of insolvency, the court may grant a subsidiary imprisonment of one day for every six months, or at its discretion, may ship both fine and imprisonment," Bangoy said.

Asked what they hoped the ordinance would bring to the city, Bangoy said, "This can also bring about personal change and a sense of well-being."

Tony Apura, a publisher of a local tabloid here, described the measure as "novel, timely and healthy in the light of so many concerns."

"It can also be good for tourism," he said. Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao

Church hits big coal mine project

To next page A-3

Corp. in 2007 with an offer of $3.95 billion.

Additional 8,000 hectares

The Church and other groups are also opposing the plan of the energy department to award an additional 8,000 hectares in three towns in the province in a private deal for the mining of some P5-9 billion worth of coal deposits.

The new area will cover the jurisdictions of 14 barangays in the towns of Cavinti, Nagcarlan, Pagsanjan and Victoria.

The areas identified by the energy department for coal mining materials on the remaining 84,000 hectares of forest land of Cotta-Banahaw, according to opponents of coal mining.

A report by provincial consultant Manuel I. Mapa said the disturbance of the ground surface and forested areas during mining operations would increase soil erosion and cause flooding in the towns of Alaminos, Bay, Bengkulan, Bagumbayan, San Miguel, Rizal, Magsaysay in Los Baños, and Bitaogan and Mikaylo in Calauan.

Mine tailings would also endanger watersheds and rivers.

Loss of carbon sink

Mapa said coal mining would leave the forests open to massive exploitation from foreigners (soldiers-turned-), "human sink-size" settlers and illegal loggers, which would result in the loss of forest cover capable of absorbing 8.7 million tons of carbon dioxide.

"Mining in the watershed zoned Mikaban does not affect Sinners operations and disperse power consumption as mentioned PEO applies per year in savings," Mapa said. Instead Water and Electricity Cooperative asks further power plants.

Absence of consultation

In a statement of concern sent to all churches on the island on March 1, Bishop Marcelo A. de los Santos of the Diocese of Boac appealed to local and national leaders to stop all mining operations in the province in the absence of public consultations with affected sectors.

Grandiose power have the right to know the disastrous effects mining would bring to the island and its people, De los Santos said.

"We don't want our island and our people to suffer from such tragedies brought about by irresponsible mining activities," he said.

The bishop asked the faithful to support and stand by the diocese in the struggle against large-scale mining until the Marinduque ecosystem or the island's rich natural resources.

30 new coal areas

His statement came a week after the Department of Energy closed the 2009 bidding for 30 new coal areas in the country, including three 30 in Central Luzon covering 6,000 hectares.

In Bulacan town, a prospective miner showed up at the Municipal Council two months ago with a coal mining permit duly approved by the Department of Energy.

Fortunately for Bulacan, the council had caught its endorsement for his mining operations in the town, according to Bulacan Councilor Rosalito Cabezon.

A RUSTIC view of the fields, river and mountains of Pangasinan, Cotabato, are of the three towns covered by a common clear title government awarded to Manila Oro Resources Inc. for coal mining. [illegible]

IN THE KNOW

Coal is fuel of choice for power generation

DESPITE MARKET GROWTH AND increasingly opposition to its use, fuel coal is likely to remain the fuel of choice for power generation due mainly to its abundance and relatively lower price as compared to other fuel types.

The Philippine Energy Plan, which aims to reduce coal imports by 20 percent and encourage local production, projects coal demand to grow from 12.2 million metric tons in 2008 to around 15.28 million MT in 2018, of which 13.06 million MT are for power generation and 2.22 million MT are for cement.

In 2007, about 75 percent of coal consumed in the Philippines came from other countries (7.7 million MT out of 10.2 million MT). The country's main source was Indonesia (4.5 million MT), followed by China (2.1 million MT).

In 2008, China almost completely stopped exporting coal to nearby new economy. This, coupled with rising fuel prices, pushed prices up at the wholesale electricity spot market, or Wesm, to higher levels unseen since its commercial operations in 2006.

Meralco customers had to pay an additional 67.13 centavos per kilowatt-hour in April 2008.

In the Philippines, coal comes from Semirara Island, Cagayan Valley and Surigao del Sur.

Coal-fired power plants

Coal accounts for about a third of the generation mix of National Power Corp., the country's biggest power producer. Napocor has earmarked as much as P28 billion this year for the purchase of its coal requirements.

The bulk of the amount will be used for the coal requirements of the 1,218-megawatt (MW) Sual power plant in Pangasinan, 700-MW Pagbilao plant in Quezon and the 200-MW Naga facility in Cebu.

Other existing coal plants in the country are in Calaca, Batangas; Masinloc, Zambales; Mauban, Quezon province; Pinamucan, Batangas; Toledo in Cebu; and Misamis Oriental.

In December 2008, there were 38 existing coal-operating contracts.

Coal areas up for bidding

In May, the Department of Energy offered contracts to explore and develop 30 areas for coal reserves in the country under the fourth Philippine Energy Contracting Round (PECR) 2009.

PECR is a public bidding mechanism of encouraging companies to invest in the country's energy sector.

The coal areas offered for bidding are located in 14 provinces: Cebu (Bolljon, Cavinti, Naga and Asturias), Quezon (General Nakar, Polillo Island and Tagkawayan), Masbate (Cataingan), Albay (Rapu-Rapu), Catanduanes (Virac), Pangasinan and Ilocos Sur (Santa Cruz), Zamboanga del Norte (Katipol), Zamboanga Sibugay (Diplahan-Buug, Siay, Payao and Buug).

Davao Oriental (Mawab, Tarragona), Agusan del Sur (Bunawan, Sibagat and Trento), Surigao del Norte (Kitcharao and Dapa), Surigao del Sur (Cagwait-Marihatag, San Agustin-Lianga and Tandag-Tago), South Cotabato, Sarangani, and Sultan Kudarat (Maguindanao and Shariff Kabunsuan).

CO2 emissions

Environmentalists claim the operation of coal-fired power plants releases three and large amounts of carbon dioxide, contributing significantly to climate change.

Coal-fired power plants are a good source of electricity like cost, quality and service, which have adverse effects on humans, crops and even building materials.

Environmental activist group Greenpeace estimates that a 100-MW coal plant emits at least 25 pounds of mercury a year. Mercury is considered a 10-hectare lake, according to Greenpeace, 0.0002 pound of mercury.

Mercury can also cause nervous brain damage in fetuses and mental disorders, males and sensitive nervous systems and mental disorders in children.

Sources: Inquirer Archives, *2008 Philippine Statistical Yearbook*, *www.nigh.gov.ph*, *Coal-fired power plants and their impacts*, A Greenpeace Briefing and *Asia report* (2005), Asian Geographic

Forests wiped out

Mining for coal also has several adverse effects on the environment and on human health. Surface mining, in which the horizontal contours of a mountainside are stripped, results the elimination of vegetation and results in the destruction of soil profile.

Forests are wiped out by the demolition or removal zones of coal mining, leading to the destruction and displacement of wildlife and degradation of air quality.

Coal refuse is mine sites can seep into the ground and poison bodies of water. Coal dust contains trace elements like cancer.

Coal overburdens have triggered landslide-related causes of power like wind, sunlight and rainwater.

Consequence, quoting a US study, says that wind energy is the Philippines can supply more than seven times the country's power demand.

Sunlight that falls on land half the size of Quezon City can produce the whole country's energy, adds, Greenpeace added.

Aliran Gamudan and Cyril Bondoc Jr. Jaquinn Rimando

Sources: Inquirer Archives, *2008 Philippine Statistical Yearbook*, *www.nigh.gov.ph*, *Coal-fired power plants and their impacts*, A Greenpeace Briefing and *Asia report* (2005), Asian Geographic

By quoted Torres, who is from Tandoyan, Vigo, in saying that he (Torres) would not insist on pursuing the operation if the municipal council would not endorse it.

Sabonsol said the energy department permit that gives Torres the go-signal to proceed with coal extraction would go against the sentiments of the Municipal Council.

The council has passed a resolution objecting to the inclusion of 12,000 hectares of the town of Sariaya in the coal operating contract of Manila Oro.

Angels Reyes singed permit

Documents showed that Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes signed Executive Order 270 on May 16, 2008-019 issued to Torres on Oct. 30, 2008 covering a parcel of coal-bearing land in Barangay San Miguel, Pangasinan.

Under the permit valid for five years, Torres can extract 7,000 metric tons a year at Compo-Enrique under the supervision of Manila Oro when its coal operating contract (COC) is converted into development and production COC.

All coal produced by Torres will be sold to Manila Oro, according to the permit.

While the operations are not yet under Manila Oro, Torres would have to hire a full-time mining engineer to oversee mining operations.

Taxes is also mandated to pay the national government 2 percent of the gross sales of the coal produced as the area based on the sales process.

A coal production of 1.5 million metric tons in five years would earn Manila Oro P6.2 billion in gross revenues. Local governments are expected to get P9 million in taxes and royalties, P30 million.

No response from Reyes

In a resolution dated Nov. 17, 2008, the council said there were no moves in showing that the energy department and other agencies had complied with the provisions of the Local Government Code requiring prior consultation with local government units, nongovernmental organizations and other sectors to be affected by the proposed coal mining.

Councilor Cabrera said the Department of Energy to submit a copy of the resolution was personally delivered by Mayor Gregorio Angeles, did not respond.

A group calling itself Kamalayagan Kontra Mina is planning to hold an information campaign to warn the people of the loss of Cavinti's precious forests and watersheds should coal mining proceed.

Information drive

At a meeting of the Diocese of Boac Social Action Foundation Inc. on July 31, the group agreed to conduct the information drive in villages, town plazas and schools.

"Whether we like it or not, we need the help of all the people of Cotabato even in stopping any mining activity or in avoiding the parties bound to a small-scale mining president," Fr. Lindoman Aow Inquit told the group.

Opponents claim that the mining activity would benefit only Manila Oro but damage Tres landslides, flooding and reduced water flow to rivers would cost more than whatever local government units would get from mining.

Water flow in the 11 rivers/streams system would be reduced by 22-28 percent and water would be polluted water, they said.

"We are afraid that Torres is just being used by Manila Oro to operate large-scale mining in the province," Gopez said, noting that the permit was issued in the absence of public consultations and an environmental compliance certificate (ECC).

Without ECC

In Davao in CSC, Environment Secretary Jose Atienza said the Silaro Dev project in Cotabato may had not been issued an ECC.

Atienza said all coal mining projects of more than 50 hectares should get an ECC from the main office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

An ECC for a mining project covers permits like an authority to transfer trees, water rights and endorsement from local government units, according to Director Julius Amador of the Environmental Management Bureau.

Remaining biodiversity

The Federation of Irrigators Association of Cotabatoans, and the Ecosystem Research Group against Environmental Degradation (Ergo) also opposed any kind of mining in the province.

"We cannot allow the approval of a mining operations from in here, especially what is left of the province's remaining biodiversity," Ilong and Fabillar-Bondoc said.

Clemente Bautista of the Bishops-People's Network for the Environment said the approval of the project violated the Aquino administration's commitment to fight climate change.

"Coal, even Indian being featured, is dirty and carbon intensive. It changes landscape, destroys communities and destroys our fragile ecosystems," Bautista said. — *With reports from Gaea Katreena Cabico, Jhesset Enano, Lucas and Nicole Pejes*

A RESIDENT of Hamanggar village in Datu Anggal Midtimbang town in Maguindanao looks over the remains of houses destroyed in the recent fighting between government troops and Moro Islamic Liberation Front. JOHNNY MACAY

They want to be home before Ramadan

From page A1

because of land in Barangay Buayan here, has been serving both pupils and people displaced from renewed fighting between government troops and Moro rebels.

It has become rote of when residents tell Nakem schools."

According to Akmad Gutamidang, principal of Datu Gutamang Elementary School, 18 primary and intermediate schools have relocated to Datu Gumbay along with their displaced families. There, classes have continued, with pupils of different grade levels sharing a room, despite the irrepressible giggle and repulsive smell outside.

As Bae, the teachers thought that the incentive classes would just be brief, Gutamidang says. When it appeared that the clashes were not ending, they could only look forward to spending school year 2009-09 under makeshift tents.

'Education in Emergency'

The Department of Education (DepEd) launched an "Education in Emergency" program in Datu Gumbay and three other towns in Maguindanao on that learning interruption should continue during the period of adversity.

During the summer break, the classrooms became living quarters. When the school year opened in June, bunkhouses were built in the evacuation open areas of the school compound.

A total of 565 families or 3,025 people occupy the bunkhouses, while 100 families or 533 people live underneath the school building.

Today classes are held from Monday to Thursday to allow the families in Emergency approach that also aims to hone the survival skills of children of evacuees. Despite the frustration, economic hardship in preserving families from sending them to school.

Former Tacurta Ugalis said shame of his four children had to stop going to school after losing his income of livelihood when they fled.

As of June 30, more than 20,000 elementary and high school students in 11 of the 37 towns of Maguindanao have been affected by the war, the DepEd in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) said. In Datu Piang alone, less than half, or 9,200, of the more than 10,000 children of school age have been enrolled, said Tal Oliver of Barangay Cesariffer.

"We are afraid for our children. Many of them are no longer in school. We fear the children will learn nothing but evacuation, war and bloodshed again," said the evacuees' Datu of the Dalandes Ad. drum Dalisi.

"By resisting that our children return to school, we refuse to surrender the future to this chaos sighted. 'war,' Olaya said.

Ramadan

The evacuees have demanded that they be sent home in time for the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which starts either on Aug. 21 or Aug. 22.

The ninth month of the Islamic calendar, Ramadan principally involves fasting, which is meant to teach the Muslims patience, modesty and spirituality. Muslims ask for forgiveness of sins, pray for guidance and help in refraining from everyday evils, and try to purify themselves through self-restraint and good deeds.

Zainudin Maling, executive director of the Moro Law Center, said the displacement of Ramadan was very significant in honoring the psyche of the evacuees "as they face the challenge of rebuilding their lives and communities."

He called on humanitarian aid agencies to consolidate their efforts in order to speed up the rehabilitation of homes and villages. "Of course, we have to put up new homes for those whose homes were burned, and provide them support for livelihood startup," he stressed.

As of May, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) said 7,762 houses had been damaged in the war-affected areas, only 1,039 of which had been rehabilitated. In this same about, 365 houses were burned, according to the outside's disaster response center.

In Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, which host 51,377 students, 55 school buildings have been damaged and needed repair, said the DepEd ARMM.

The NDCC placed damage to livestock and crops at P5.35 million.

Least attended

"There seems to be no coordinated program to address the concerns of displacement," said Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, chair of the government peace panel, when he briefed journalists in Cotabato City last month.

The Norway-based International Displacement Monitoring Center also warned that displacements in Mindanao were among the least attended throughout the world.

While they are seeking government indemnity for those who had died or incurred illnesses, the evacuees want the withdrawal of soldiers and Moro rebels from their villages to avoid any armed skirmishes between them.

For now, the evacuees is building, but more than half of the houses in Barangay Kagui have remained unoccupied for as army soldiers who have been occupying government buildings and a mosque.

"I cannot say that there were injury at this time," Teodoro said. "Their objective was to stay before the last skirmish (the ambush of the Marines)."

He said Wednesday's deadly gun battle was still subject to post-operation report and investigations.

"I am satisfied with the report of Garcia to me as the security commander for underscore," he said, referring to First Marine Brigade commander Brig. Gen. Ruskin Guerrero.

"But I am not at liberty to state what precautionary measures he undertook but he did it in the most careful way."

Teodoro confirmed earlier statements that the military had coordinated with the MILF operating near the Abu Sayyaf camp in Tipo-Tipo town and that Moro rebels from another town were responsible for attacking the Marines.

The military also suffered more than 20 wounded during the daylong fighting that led to the capture of a major Abu Sayyaf camp believed to be a training ground for bomb-makers. At least 21 Abu Sayyaf bandits died in the fighting.

Teodoro also said that aside from posting more war materiel into Mindanao, the military would also intensify its community relations programs in Basilan. These include building roads and operating so-called community kitchens for evacuees there.

Senate probe

The Senate has decided to investigate the Basilan gun battle, assigning the inquiry to the national defense committee under Sen. Rodolfo Biazon.

Earlier, Biazon proposed a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate for the suspension of the planned resumption of peace talks with the MILF "until the stalled positions to be taken by the government."

In a privilege speech, Biazon said the government position should be clarified because that this treachery would not be repeated."

Saying that the 22 slain soldiers fell into a trap, Sen. Panfilo Lacson agreed with Biazon on the need to review the government policy of coordinating with the MILF on troop movements.

"We need to review this policy in order to save our soldiers. If not, we'll see more of Marine and Army soldiers being killed without any fight," Lacson said in a privilege.

"There seems to be a pattern where in cases where the military coordinates their movement, a trap or ambush happens against our soldiers," he said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. urged the administration to use lasting diplomacy. Maximo Pacquiao, Philippine Ambassador to Malaysia, peace ambassador, is a peacemaker in Mindanao conflict.

Lacson along with Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Francis Escudero said the government could use Pacquiao in achieving peace, if he could be of help.

Formal protest

Malacañang is preparing a formal protest against the MILF over the bloody clash.

Bot Lorelei Fajardo, deputy presidential spokesperson, maintained the gun battle should not mull the peace negotiations.

"We are committed to peace in Mindanao despite what happened," she said.

But she said the government would not allow the clash to pass and would lodge a formal protest. Earlier, Office of the Peace Adviser Avelino Razon.

Director General Arnau Serrano, chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), said the military and the police were assessing the Basilan situation, and added: "Nowor will be studied and redeployed to reinforce the area."

Asked what would make for more a effective operation, Serrano said: "We need to reinforce ground troops in the continuing operations ... depending on the circumstances of battles in areas where the pursuit operations are ongoing."

Church urges prayers

Roman Catholic bishops called for prayers.

"For peace in Basilan and other parts of Mindanao, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) appeals for prayer for all the victims and their bereaved families. We ask for prayers and tributes for them," Jun Archbishop and CBCP president Angel Lagdameo said in a statement.

"Violence, retaliation and subsequent violence never stops and destroys the seeds of just peace processes. Peace cannot result from violence and retaliation," Lagdameo said. With reports from Christian V. Esguerra, Jerry Esplanada and Dona Pazaldiaguin

GMA allots ₱5B more for direct cash aid

From page A1

billion presidential jet.

'Look at the positive side'

Late week, at the height of the discussion, the Palace released an executive order announcing the creation of local "multibarger" ink forces nationwide.

Malacañang said the moves were neither intended to endear Mrs Arroyo to the public nor silence her critics.

"No, no, no. The purpose, definitely," Fajardo said in a press briefing. "Let's look at the positive side rather than look into why the President is doing what she's doing now?"

Fajardo said Mrs Arroyo increased the coverage of the cash transfer program only because "it was proven to be effective."

"It reduces the number of poor Filipinos, that's our objective. So, so that's what we hope to achieve," she said.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral earlier described the PPP as a "developmental program that invests in human capital."

She said beneficiaries would get conditional cash transfers after meeting certain requirements, such as sending their children to school, visiting health centers for check-ups and attending family planning sessions.

No consolate money

Mr Arroyo's allies, seeking to defend attacks over the US diplomats, have insisted that administration lawmakers plotted up the talks, and attacked the media for zeroing in on the supposedly scandalous spending.

Fajardo said the planned presidential jet was reversed as "no big deal" for Mr Arroyo.

"She won't benefit [from the size of a new plane] for long, that's why she left it to the next president to make the purchase," she said in Filipino.

The Philippine consulate general in New York said no consulate funds were advanced to pay for the dinners and hotel accommodations of Mr Arroyo and party during their US visit.

In a statement, Philippine Consul General to New York Cecilia Soberg said news reports quoting an unnamed consulate official as insinuating that consulate funds were used to pay for the expenses of the President's party were "not true."

As such, this would not cause any delay in the payment of the salaries of consulate personnel, as insinuated in the reports, Soberg said.

Senators relieved

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson and five other colleagues, including Pilmer allies, expressed relief that Mr Arroyo had scrapped plans to buy a new presidential jet.

But Lacson also said: "They should also abandon P1 million dinners ... which are callous and unbecoming in the many who are hungry."

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said Ms Arroyo "has done a politically-correct solution."

Calling the cancelation of the purchase a "good move," Senate Minority Leader Jinggoy Estrada Jr. said this was because "the circumstances do not justify the acquisition of a jet plane."

While relieved, Sen. Francis Pangilinan said he would not understand why the government in the first place thought of acquiring such "luxury" amid the global economic crisis.

Pangilinan said those who proposed such a purchase "should be raided to a clear upside down."

With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Cynthia D. Rivera and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Political derby? Cockers enter party-list contest

From page A1

Kinchino (Comelec) for a slot in next year's party-list race.

When could that a group called "Abanse Pinay" or "Buhay Hayaan Yumabong" (read between gossip-lines) Comelec for registration, Comelec Chair Jose Melo was dumbfounded.

"A group of candidplanes! Why are they Lonesidewell marginalized when they have the money?" Melo said.

Asteroid Gazonga page petition that the group filed with the poll body Abanse is seeking congressional seat on behalf of students in the solidfighting industry, such as the brian (bet sider), bauske (bet manager), cannote (assistant), sabbers (ticket dispenser) and cockfight referees.

The group said its members could be considered marginalized because "they live a hand-to-mouth existence, earning only if the sabong [cockfighting expert] they work for wins."

Abanse identified its representative as Hal Echiverri and said the group is based in Sucat, Paranaque City.

A Comelec employee tasked with receiving the petitions said the group submitted income documents yet insisted that the Comelec accept Abanse's papers.

The employee, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to speak on the matter, said the group even banned Clarence Saez, reg. champion Manny Pacquiao, who is also a high-stake sabungero, among its members.

Melo could not hide his exasperation over the huge number of groups seeking seats in the House of Representatives despite having dubious or scant credentials.

Asteroid Gazonga, he said, were apparently just set to "blame" the party-list law, which was enshrined in the 1987 Constitution to give important yet voiceless sectors a say in policy-making.

"They just form groups just for the sake of forming one," Melo said, noting that some petitioners had neither a clear advocacy nor a proper constituency.

Melo lamented that these applicants only wanted a share of pork barrel funds. "If they win, then they will have pork. Congressmen [already] get over asking for more," he said.

As of 3 p.m. yesterday, 264 groups have sought Comelec accreditation for the 2010 elections. In the 2007 party-list race, the poll body approved 87 groups.

Ladlad is back

Among the last-day petitioners were the gay advocacy group Ang Ladlad, indigenous people's advocate Katribu, and children's rights defender Akap Bata.

Ang Ladlad, a group led by transgender personality Danton Remoto, was disqualified by the Comelec in 2007.

"We are really grappling [with the huge number of petitioners]," said Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento. "And to think that this is not the only week of Comelec fight now."

The agency is expected to decide on all petitions by the end of October (Sometime said).

Melo said the poll body would be strict in screening the party-list applicants.

He said appointing a long list would make the ballot more complicated and expensive, especially with the country holding its first automated election in 2010.

"How do we know if [if the list would be very long]? The lower would be cumbersome and the seat [that wasn't used to doubt] would be too small. It might be hard for the machine to read," he said.

Reasonable number

In his view, Melo said, the "reasonable number" of eligible groups should be between 50 and 55.

Unlike in past elections where voters wrote down the name of their chosen group on the ballot, the 2010 pole would have votes marking a space corresponding to the group the ballot assisted by a machine.

Sarmiento explained that aspiring party-list groups "must have a presence in more than half of the region" in order to qualify.

They should have implemented projects in the region with enough resources to wage a campaign, he said.

The Comelec will also reject previously accredited groups who were not able to get 2 percent of the votes in the last two contested elections.

Also removing an incumbent party-list representative boldly proposed something that could dampen the enthusiasm of would-be lawmakers, including the groups that had revamped the Comelec.

P1 pork?

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said pork barrel funds—a lawmaker's source of corruption, leverage, and kickbacks—should be reduced to P1 next year but those grab-prone funds be used not for development projects but for election campaigns.

Casiño pushed for the cut to appease opposition to so-called classroom projects in so-called districts, who claimed that the P70 million-pork that those members get each year was no longer enough to meet the rising cost of supplies needed for their projects.

"I think during election season, it's dangerous to increase the pork barrel of congressmen and congresswomen," Casino said in a press conference.

Just since lawmakers often "threaten" to reduce the annual budget of government agencies or a press whenever bureaucrats get on their nerves during public hearings, "perhaps it is time congressmen get a taste of their own medicine," Casino added.

With a report from Leila B. Salaverria

Murray taps Rogers Cup; Janković triumphs

MONTREAL—ANDY MURRAY OVERCAME HIS MOST STUBBORN rubber, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (5), 6-1 over rival Alexandr Dolgopolov Jr. to clinch third title of the 3D before Rogers Cup. The victory gave Murray 4000 ranking points to put him in 6th place compared with 11,280 for Roger Federer. Meanwhile, Jelena Janković used defensive "happy to be back" play the lead world No. 1 Dinara Safina, 6-4, 6-2, for the Cincinnati Open title Sunday. *AP Photos*

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PGA SHOCKER

Plucky Yang cuts a giant down to size

THE VICTOR AND THE BEATEN Yang Yong-eun (left) walks past Tiger Woods who hangs his head down after missing his putt on the 12th at Hazeltine National. —AP

DAEGU, SOUTH KOREA—YANG YONG-EUN SHOOK HIS FISTS AND thrusted with joy over a victory left uncaged the world. Equally stunning was the sight of Tiger Woods, sweating over the final putt of the PGA Championship only with nothing at stakes.

The final major of the year delivered a pair of shocking developments Sunday.

Yang, a 37-year-old from South Korea who won in PGA Tour qualifying school after years in Japan, became the first non-American player to capture a major title with a series of spectacular shots on the back nine of Hazeltine.

Even more memorable was the gaze he beat.

Woods was 14-0 when he was atop the leaderboard going into the final round of a major. He had never lost any tournament or downtime red when leading by one or more shot.

Yang showed everyone how to beat him.

When he rose 96-yards to finish cooperate 14-96, Yang dipped to three 60 her his caught to take the lead. Clinging to a one-shot lead, a text slightly blocking his view of the flag on the 18th hole and Woods in the fairway, Yang hit the shot of his life. His 3-iron hybrid cleared a bunker and settled 12 feet away.

And with that, Yang shot up 281 great.

The stands that the final hole to close with a 2-under 70, giving him a three-shot victory when Woods missed yet another short par putt and had a 71. his worst score ever in the final round of the major when he was in the last group.

All the other 14 major championships Tiger won, Five pointed well for the entire week," Woods said. "And today, that didn't happen."

For Woods, it was the second time he has finished runner-up in the PGA Championship or Hazeltine: both times to majestic winner. Seven years ago, he finished the last four holes and came up one shot of Rich Beem.

Yang trailed by two shots going into the final round, caught Woods at the turn, and was tied with the leader today when Yang chipped in for eagle on the 14th. When it looked as though nerves were getting the best of him on a three-putt bogey at the 17th, he delivered his two most important shots that brought him an unlikely victory.

His 9-iron of 150 yards at the majors that might have been the biggest Yang topped the mighty Tiger Woods.

Jimmy Deen was poised to become the oldest Masters champion at 46 until Angel Cabrera beat him in a playoff. Phil Mickelson, coming from seven shot his with was disgraced with concert, was on the verge of finally winning the US Open until Lucas Glover beat him over the last two holes, beat just last month. Tom Watson, 59, was on fi first par putt away from winning the British Open, then lost in a playoff to Stewart Cink.

Yang finished at 8-under 280 and won $1.35 million, along with a five-year exemption on the PGA Tour and the majors.

Asian-born players had some close in the majors—Lu Liang-huan of Taiwan finishing one shot behind Lee Trevino at the 1971 British Open, and T.C. Chen's famous two-day gaffe that cost him a chance at the 1985 US Open, where he was runner-up to Andy North.

This was a two-man race throughout the back nines, after defending champion Padraig Harrington imploded in the group ahead of them on the par-3 16. S. Hennigton was one shot behind when he hit five shots in the water—including a chip from behind the green, just so he did last week in Firestone—and took a quintuple-bogey 8. He shot a 78.

Mcsen many points posted his bogey as Ho. 4 and made bogey from the bunker at No. 8, sending the final putting to the back nines in a tie for the lead.

Woods regained the lead with a 3-wood on the 604-yard 12th hole onto the green, only to give it back with a bogey on the 12th after he bunked his tee shot. He twice missed birdie putts inside 10 feet—at No. 13 and No. 14—and then inconvenient drifted to Yang. —AP

Iran whips fading China; Jordan third

TIANJIN, CHINA—IRAN STUNNED HOST China, winning its semifinal basketball crown with a crushing 70-52 victory in the Fiba Asia championship final on Sunday.

Anchored by bulking Memgbin Sohrabi center Hamed Haddadi, who topped the Iranians with 19 points, the Iranians won their ninth game out of nine by outplaying the host superpower from start.

"We knew there was a big pressure on China," said Iran's coach Mansur Hiuki. "But we were the champions and we were playing to retain the championship."

Without the injured Yao Ming, China was relying on Yi Jianlian to lead its challenge for a 15th title in 18 appearances at the biennial tournament but the ousted point guard of the evening bowing in frustration at the matching Shaw Jersey Sun forward.

Iran, who won its first title in Japan two years ago while China settled for last place, set the pace from the start, humping the Chinese in defense and cashing a swish through the red rocks of Chinese to take a 11-10 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Efficient movement of points ensured halftime gave them a 40-28 advantage and long before the end, the youthful team had never relinquished its defeat with some rounding on new coach Gao Hongang.

"We were not fully prepared mentally," said Gao. "We were not at our best, particularly in offense. If we'd played our best game we would have been competitive."

Jordan, Jordan beat Lebanon, 80-66, to secure third place and book a spot at next year's world championship in Turkey along with the two finalists. Reuters

Despite Fiba Asia failure, Guiao not losing hope on RP five

By Marang R. Castillo

BEIJING—PUTTING IT SIMPLY, PHILippines coach Yeng Guiao believes the country is just 5 to 12 points behind the best teams in Asia now.

Despite failing to land at least third place in the Fiba-Asia World Champion qualifying that ended Sunday, Guiao said his perception has changed in just two weeks of handling the national squad in top-notch competition.

"My first perception was that we wouldn't stand up to these responses," Guiao told reporters Monday morning, referring to the Middle East squads and China which loomed unbeatable just a few weeks ago in the eyes of the five-foot Banjo King senator.

"But after two weeks here in the Fiba-Asia, I realized we aren't so far from them. I'm still in shock," Guiao said. "Malapit lang pala (they're not too far in terms of skill and talent) after all."

The Philippines finished eighth in the 20-nation event held in the city of Tianjin while playing only in 11 second-to-none tournaments into a booming through the Arabs qualifying in early June.

"Every time we play them (an opponent for the second time), it gets easier for us, and it get harder for them to how to stop us," Guiao noted, pointing to how the Philippines battled the Asian heavyweights in semis, wins after the Asean Cup in Taipei three weeks ago.

GUIAO Harbi

In Taipei, the Filipinos' 1st to Arabia by 31, to lose by 22, to Japan and South Korea, (whom and even Chinese Taipei.

In Tianjin, the Nationals got back at Japan with convention, lost the first game to South Korea and then got tripped at the rules by the Koreans in the fight for seventh spot after losing to Arabia by just 11 and eventual champion Iran by just 10 in the elimination.

"Overall, I thought that the Middle East countries and China were way out of our reach," Guiao said. "But with a second progress and improvements in the PBA (rookies), we can come down to their standards."

Guiao said that changing the rules on fouls in the PBA—by allowing harder body contact and cutting automatic fouls on coach to player—would help the country greatly in international competition.

He said "making the league (PBA) entertaining by making it a working game," is what is hampering our chances to be dominant internationally again. "Basketball when you go out to play intense (usually defense in the arena).

"And if a crowd of players, say a PBA league, could impose it between rookies more to play abroad, the season could have such its return to Asian prominence.

A international referee, preferably someone outside also be a big help.

"If we intimidate (a player), that guy would be thrown out at 6 or 7 points," said Guiao, who made it clear that he's not apologetic or another word will coach.

"After our take loss, I became more convinced that we can be the best in Asia again," he said.

Injured hand no excuse, says brave Donaire

By Rocah Trinidad

NONITO DONAIRE JR. YESTERDAY confirmed he injured his left hand in the third round but refused to use this as an excuse in his unanimous decision win over Rafael Concepcion of Panama on Sunday.

"I hurt my left hand when I connected. I think with an uppercut, in the third round," Donaire said (2009s Mike Enriquez in his "Salud!" morning radio program over dzRH).

Donaire, speaking on the phone from Las Vegas, Nevada, said he had to use his injured hand sparingly in the fight for the interim WBO super flyweight title at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino.

After he agreed to take a big risk to fighting a much bigger Concepcion, Donaire said he had in mind to the right techniques to avoid being maimed somehow.

"Boxing is career science," he told sports columnist Joaquin Henson, who reached the hour with Gabby Quiz Trinidad.

Henson said Donaire left the fight versus with an ice pack over his swollen knuckles.

Donaire, who said his fight was in honor of Ezzy Aquino, could end up facing Venezuelan Gerardo Martinez in rematch.

Dan Duva, who holds both the World Boxing Association (WBA) and World Boxing Council (WBC) super flyweight belts, was accused by Donaire in their WBA flyweight title clash two years ago.

"We are looking for a rematch with Donaire and then Gerald Martinez king," Joseph Agbako said. Duva see the fights He wants to get," said Dan Duva's Australia manager Elias Nasser in an overseas call.

Nasser told the boxing czar that their camp expects the WBA to name either Donaire and the interim title holder, which is the one in Donaire, a mandatory clash.

"It's a fight that people want to see," said Nasser. "It's what the really wants. He wants to get revenge over though our feel we have gotten over that loss with Vic's achievement in the super flyweight division." With a report from Dennis Principe, Contributor

DONAIRE: Does biceps need rest?

'Dissatisfied' SBP to PBA: It's turn of Smart Gilas

By Jane Navarro

THE SAMAHANG BASKETBOL NG PILIPINAS will now exercise full authority over the men's national team in all tournaments sanctioned by the International Basketball Federation or Fiba.

Designated the Fernando-Pilipinas would only finish in eighth place in the Fiba Asia championship last week, SBP officials yesterday shot down a proposal by national coach Yeng Guiao for the Philippine Basketball Association to remain involved in future international competitions.

Executive director Noli Sala said the SBP has already set in motion a long-term program for a respectable finish in the Asian Games next year and the 2011 Fiba Asia Championship.

"If the PBA wants to be involved, it will have to be under the direction of the SBP," said Sala. "It includes the selection of players, coaches and the national team program in general.

"We want to thank the Fernando-Pilipinas players for their sacrifice. However, we are disappointed. We were hoping that they'd finish higher, but that is something we have to work on that's why we have a long-term program."

Saying that top talents are in the PBA, Guiao earlier urged the PBA to summon tapping its stars for the national team, even though PBA commissioner Sonny Barrios said the proposed needs approval by the board of governors.

"While we appreciate the proposal, it has already been answered," said Sala.

"We already have a program in place. A program more focused, committed and responsive than the program (Fernando-Ol' team) had," added the former PBA commissioner.

A DRIVING Raymond Vicera of Perpetual Help draws a foul from JRU's Nicholas Nieto in yesterday's game. ARIEL INAMARGA

Stags nail 10th straight victory

Heavy Bombers overwhelm Altas

By Cedel P. Tapas

SAN SEBASTIAN HAMMERED DOWNCIBLE IN the NCAA men's basketball tournament yesterday, shrugging off a lethargic start for an 83-68 victory over Angeles U Perpetual inn at the JUAN Flying e Arena in San Juan.

There was no repeat of their 22-point win in the first round as the Stags were challenged at every turn by the Great Danes for three quarters before veteran Gilbert Bolanos sparked a late run that boosted San Sebastian to its 10th straight victory.

Bolanos pumped in 18 points and had eight rebounds for the Stags, who once trailed briefly at 30-31 on Aaron Santos' break shot with a minute to go in the first half.

In the second game, Altas Ogre came off the bench in poor a career-best 27 points and power Jose Hind U past Perpetual Help, 82-66, as the Bombers jacked up their record to 8-2.

The Bombers led throughout but only pulled away in the final period, where the's Jose, 2 Agas, who made 6 of 9 shots from beyond the arc, fired 14 of his total output.

The Altas absorbed their seventh setback in 10 matches while the Great Danes swayed to the other at 1-9.

"We were too relaxed," San Sebastian coach Jim Agustin said. "The intensity was down. Maybe there was a problem with the attitudes of the players. We were expecting to be overpowered."

Bolanos' feed do points in an 11-0 burst that extended a 66-59 JRU lead to 77-59 heading into the final two minutes.

In Juniors' action, San Sebastian whipped AUF, 114-34, and dispersed Holy trounced Jose Hind, 109-92, to boost their Final Four bids.

Box Score
FG 3PT FT REB
SAN SEBASTIAN 83—Bolanos 18, Agbayani 12, Sangalang 11, Barroquillo 7, Ej Mariano 6, Mendoza 5, Pascual 4, Pascual 3, Santos 3, Quinsaat 3, Alvarez 2, Ilagan 2, Gabriel 2, Cruz 2, Cabahug 0, Cruz 0, Cabahug 0, Cruz 0, Cabahug 0, Cruz 0

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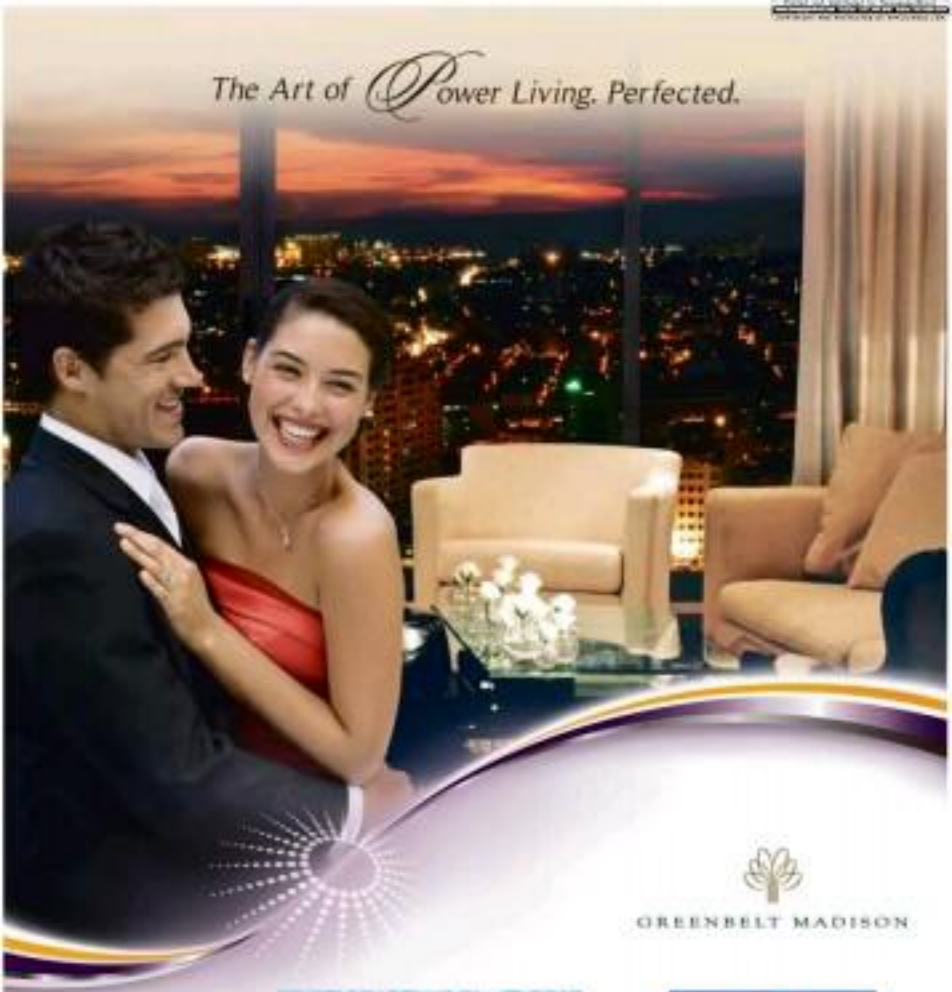

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DID YOU KNOW

On 1942, the Japanese government ordered the creation of the Preparatory Commission for Philippine Independence which was tasked to draft a transitory constitution. The constitution was promulgated on Sept. 4, 1943, at the then Metropolitan Theater building in Manila.
Cyrill Jonathan Inquirer Research

Basta maabilidad, may kapabilidad magpatakbo ng Petron Station.
Kahit madali ang pakiramdam kapag confident at madiskarte, madali rin na magpatakbo ng sariling Petron Kaibi Station.

Landbank execs face raps for tax scam

DOJ to also charge BIR officials, employees of private firms

By Norman Bordadora

STATE PROSECUTORS WILL FILE MONEY LAUNDERING, FRAUD and falsification charges against Land Bank of the Philippines officials in Binangonan, Rizal, who allegedly diverted almost P440 million in tax payments to private bank accounts from 2001 to 2002.

Also included in the charge sheet were Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) personnel and employees of private companies who allegedly connived with bank officials.

Acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera said the tax diversion scam was uncovered in 2002 by Landbank assistant auditor Ana Ramirez whose testimony formed part of the case against bank officials.

Based on the evidence gathered by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), more than P441 million in tax payments were deposited through the bank by several companies and not in right accounts at the Binangonan branch, which were owned by "four fictitious persons."

"This is the largest ... tax diversion scam [ever]," Devanadera said.

To be charged with violating the anti-money laundering act are Landbank officials Arlenio Ian Aste, Catalino Mingin, Allan Diaz and Floyd Lanayan; BIR officers Zenaida S. Mercader, Gina O. Villareto, Chonie M. Lirio, Bernadette Ongcoy, Daniel Aggabao, Danilo De Alarcon, Nerlito C. Bravo and Esther Mendoza.

Also named in the charge sheet were Sandie T. Yu, Teodosio OJ Bravo, Remy Silvers and one John Doe of Lot 2020-A Silpingcorp; Rosa Marquez and Gemma S. Martinez of OMA Marketing; Orlando Pelit of Construction Philippines Inc.; Phoebe Rosada of Precision; Loreto Castillo; Marvelino L. Salado; Susana Milagni; Artery Torres and Rodrigo G. Bautista Jr.

According to the Department of Justice (DOJ), the cases started with the opening

Latest Stories, p. 2

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5 men arrested by police for running illegal cockpit

By Julie M. Aurelio

FIVE MEN WERE ARRESTED over the weekend by policemen after they were caught having a "cupada" or illegal cockfight on a vacant lot in Barangay Culiat, Quezon City.

The Quezon City Police District's Police Intelligence Operations Unit (DPIOU) said it would be filing charges of violating Republic Act 9287 or the illegal gambling law against the five men.

The five were identified as Blasco Tibio, 50; Dante Gregorio, 41; Herni Marcelo, 45; Alberto Beron, 33, and Emilio Cortez, 58.

DPIOU head Supt. Marcelino Pedroza Jr. said a police team headed by Insp. Genaro Martinez went to Central Avenue in Barangay Culiat on Saturday morning after they received a tip that illegal cockfights were being held in an improvised cockpit in the area.

He added that Tibio, a security guard and resident of Barangay Tatalon, was tagged as the maintainer of the cockpit.

Seized from the five suspects were three fighting cocks—one live, one dead—five "tari" (knives), and a medical kit for injured cocks.

SPO1 Jonilmo Rodriguez, a member of the police team which conducted the operation, said the cockfights were held in an area that measured 150 square meters. As soon as they was surrounded by houses, the improvised cockpit was hidden from public view by a clump of trees.

"The [cockpit] only operates during weekends from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.," Rodriguez added.

Its operation earned at least P1,000 a day from around 100 regular customers who would place bets on the fighting cocks, he said.

VINTAGE WAR EQUIPMENT
Dir. Ted Reguerra of the Philippine Coast Guard inspects a vintage artillery cannon found by private contractors dredging the Pasig River. The cannon was believed to have been used during World War II.
—Jun Sarthou

Soldiers then and now

"MISSILES THE AIR AWAY"

How many times have we heard this statement?

How many times have we approved the elimination of the Abu bandit group because of government propaganda and got frustrated because it considered us to be victim?

This government is full of lies.

* * *

Every time some soldiers get killed in encounters with communist rebels, Moro bandits and the Abu Sayyaf, I cry inside.

If you think I'm surrendering or anti-police because I remember the fact that my mom is soldiers, think again.

I grew up in various military camps in the 1950s and 1960s where my father was a junior officer, company commander and finally provincial commander.

Infantry and Scout Base in Jolo; Camp Asturias in Jolo; Camp Bautista in Bonsuke; Camp Maranat Gloy; the PC camp in Pagadian; Camp Navarro in Zamboanga City; Camp in Dumalinao City; Camp Catalan in Zamboanga City; the PC camp in Dagudian City were some of the camps my family lived in during my father's days as a Constabulary officer.

Those were the days when the "always outnumbered but never outfought" which was the motto of the defunct Philippine Constabulary.

It was a big deal then when one or two soldiers were killed by Moro outlaws (the SOLO and SELF were non-existent then), ordinary bandits or Huks.

ON TARGET
Raymund Tiaglo

The killing was immediately avenged by the comrades of the deceased.

I was a 5-year-old kid in Jolo when my father was then Lieutenant, ordered a special team to go after a Moro outlaw who beheaded one of his men.

The poor soldier was buying stuff in the market in front an entire company when a Moro came from behind and chopped his head off.

In no time at all, the decapitated head of the Moro outlaw was presented to my dad.

Soldiers who were wounded in combat almost always survived because they were immediately evacuated to nearest military station hospitals, Camp Cramer Hospital, or the AFP Hospital in Manila.

Now, it's very common to see soldiers in large number being massacred by the New People Army the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf.

Many civilians in the battlefield because of loss of blood was rare or unheard of in the days of my old man.

Most of the Marines who died in the Jabyat clash with the Abu Sayyaf would have survived if they were given immediate medical attention or evacuated to a military hospital.

* * *

I was cobbling my head in complete agreement as I read Retired Lt. Herbert Bautista comments yesterday.

Pardon, a retired Air Force general, hit the nail on the head when he said, "Do our soldiers lack the discipline and leadership needed to move on foot, instead of staying on vehicles, or at least providing for point and flank guards?"

Yes, sir, Perdon may have been an Air Force pilot but he thinks like an infantry (land) officer.

When my father and his men were on patrol in Sulu and Lanao (there was only one Lanao then), they were always on foot.

They seldom rode in vehicles or the vehicles were far behind, ready to evacuate the wounded.

My father and his men moved at night and slept in the jungles during the day.

As far as I know, my father suffered no casualties when they battled outlaws and bandits because they were never ambushed.

In fact, it was they who lay in wait for the outlaws or bandits.

In my juvenile mind, I thought that the battle between soldiers and outlaws or bandits was always one-sided, like hunters bringing home their prey.

Father and his men came back to camp with two, three or four bodies of outlaws or bandits they killed in patrol.

What's the difference between soldiers in my father's time and now?

Ans: Readers of Igos.

Jokingly, meanwhile, urged residents aged 18 and above to register with the Comelec in order to become qualified to vote. At the same time, he asked them to avoid unwanted persons' participation in the 2010 elections and to avoid being deceived about the shift to automation.

Under the MOU, the city government will be in charge of the advertisements and operations aspects of the information and education campaign.

It will also mobilize the barangay operations center, Liga ng mga Barangay, Sangguniang Kabataan Federations, city civil registry office, city health department, division of city schools and the community relations office.

Igot, on the other hand, will be in charge of an action plan for the information campaign while the Comelec will prepare a comics-type primer for the campaign in coordination with the Board of Canvassers and Igot.

It will also provide the curriculum for the info-campaign and the people who will train barangay personnel on voters education.

QC, Comelec to conduct info drive on 2010 polls

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE QUEZON CITY GOVernment will be conducting an information and education campaign for qualified voters to see you're information and listed electorate.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said he has already signed a memorandum of understanding with the Commission on Elections, Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms (Iper) for the conduct of the campaign.

"If successful, plans for the 2010 election would push through, the more there should be a concerted effort now to urge new voters to register and do their part as good citizens in the coming elections," Belmonte said in a statement.

The MOU was signed last week in the Quezon City Performing Arts Theater as the Anniversary Sports Complex.

The signatories included Michael D. Olivenda, Comelec-National Capital Region (NCR) director; Maria Lourdes L. Agusin, DILG NCR director and Forum engineerwoman Lumina

Landbank execs . . .

From page A1

of accounts under fictitious names at the Landbank branch.

Once the checks issued by big-time taxpayers fell into the hands of the syndicate through messenger-clerks, the group copied the amounts on dummy checks that were deposited in the fictitious bank accounts with the account holder in power.

The DOJ added that to avoid discovery, the syndicate members and John Landbank official receipts which were issued to the taxpayers along with their tax returns which were stamped with fake validation marks. This was to make it appear that their checks were received by the bank and their tax returns filed with the BIR, the DOJ said.

When the dummy checks were on the clearing house, the clearing assistant—another member of the syndicate—switched the real checks issued by the taxpayers with the syndicate's dummy checks.

The real checks then ended up in the clearing house with the tax payments being credited to the holders of the fictitious bank accounts.

Among the big-time taxpayers who were swindled were Lorenzo Shipping Corp., Nissan Motors Inc., Honda Philippines Inc., Filipinas Makro, Mercedes Commercial Industrial Corp., Prometro, Sumitomo Philippines Inc., Bow Chemicals Philippines and CMA Marketing Corp.

The NBI started investigating the scam after a group of taxpayers went to the Landbank Binangonan branch to look into the discovery of the fictitious accounts. Instead of being thanked by the government, Sanchez, the whistle-blower, was presented by NBI officials as one of the suspects.

President Macapagal-Arroyo later apologized to Sanchez for the ban.

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Desperate man kills self

A MAN who made a living as a part-time passenger jeepney driver killed himself on Sunday afternoon, hours after he complained to his live-in partner about his inability to provide for her and their growing brood, Christopher Villanueva, 34, a resident of Pinas Street in Bahay Toro, was declared dead on arrival at the Tondo General Hospital where he was taken after he burned himself with a gasoline stove inside his home, PO3 Jay Santos of the Manila Police District (MPD) homicide section said that Villanueva's body was found by his eight-month pregnant live-in partner, Cynthia Bacsal, at around 5 p.m. on Sunday. The police said that hours earlier, the victim had complained that he "had no idea how to provide for his five children and was worried about the coming of a sixth child." —Jeannette I. Andrade

Drug supplier arrested

A DRUG supplier whose customers included police-linked drug pushers was arrested by policemen in Taguig City over the weekend. Senior Supt. Camilo Cascolan, city police chief, said Joel Sebastian alias Tatlon, 32, a resident of DBTC Compound in Purok 1A, Barangay Lower Bicutan, was arrested after he and his customers tipped his activities off to the police. The policemen said that they frequently bought drugs from Velasco which they then sold to their customers. Velasco was arrested after he received marked money from undercover police in a drug buy-bust in Barangay Kanlurangan, Cascolan said. He was also charged with illegal possession and sale of drugs at the Taguig prosecutor's office.
—Ann Catherine Cabico

Motorcycle driver killed

A MOTORCYCLE rider without a helmet was found dead on the C-5 flyover yesterday morning. The body of Jordan C. Reyes was spotted on the flyover through closed circuit television cameras installed in the area. Barangay Ugong officials immediately called up rescue workers who were in the area at 2:15 a.m. yesterday. Reyes was driving a Honda 30M motorcycle with plate number PI 4126. His death was listed as an accident. —Beverly T. Rafferty

Nixon tried to enlist Brazil in Chile coup plot

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL—PRESIdent Richard Nixon discussed with Brazil's president a cooperative effort to overthrow the government of Salvador Allende of Chile, according to recently declassified documents that reveal deep collaboration between the United States and Brazil in trying to root out leftists in Latin America during the Cold War.

The formerly secret memos, published Sunday by the National Security Archive in Washington, show that Brazil and the United States discussed plans to overthrow or destabilize not only Allende but also Fidel Castro of Cuba and others.

Nixon, at a meeting in the Oval Office on Dec. 9, 1971, said he was willing to offer Brazil the assurances, monetary or otherwise, it might need in rid South America of leftist governments, the White House memorandum of the meeting shows.

Nixon sees Brazil's military government as a critical partner in the region. "There were many things that Brazil as a South American country could do that the US could not," Nixon told the Brazilian president, Gen. Emilio Medici, according to the memo.

"Even by the standards of what is already known about the extensive contacts between the United States and Latin American allies in the context of the Cold War, these documents reveal a higher level of collaboration than was believed to be the case," said Michael Shifter, vice president of the Inter-American Dialogue, a Latin American policy research group in Washington.

The Nixon administration was openly hostile to Allende, and previously released documents have shown that his administration financed efforts to destabilize Allende's government and backed the coup that overthrew him in 1973.

The newly disclosed memos shed no light on whether Brazil ultimately did play a role in the coup.

During their meeting, Nixon asked Medici whether the Chilean military was capable of overthrowing Allende. "President Medici replied that they were, adding that Brazil was exchanging many officers with the Chileans, and made clear that Brazil was working toward this end," the memo said.

Peter Kornbluh, director of the National Security Archive's Chile and Brazil projects, said the documents revealed "a hidden chapter of subimperialist intervention." He added on President Lula Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil to make public his nation's military archives. AFP/DPA

Suicide truck bomb attack kills at least 14 in Russia south

NAZRAN, RUSSIA—A SUICIDE BOMBER exploded a truck at a police station in Russia's restive North Caucasus Monday, killing at least 14 people and wounding 62 others, officials said.

The bombing was the deadliest for months in Russia's south and dented Kremlin claims to be stabilizing the North Caucasus region, where 13 years of separatist fighting in Chechnya has increasingly spilled into surrounding provinces.

The attackers entered the gates of the local police headquarters in the city of Nazran in Ingushetia and detonated explosives as police officers lined up for a morning check, said Rashid Ibragov, a spokesman for the regional president.

At least 14 people were killed and 62 were wounded, said Svetlana Gorbakova of the regional branch of the Investigation Committee of the Russian Prosecutor General's office. She said there were at least nine children among the wounded.

The attackers used the truck, which carried at least 20 kilograms of explosives, were pulverized by the blast, Gorbakova said. The police building was still on fire hours after the blast, and nearby buildings were badly damaged.

An Associated Press reporter saw 11 bodies in the morgue in Nazran, the largest city in Ingushetia, which borders Chechnya to the west.

While large-scale fighting from the two wars that ravaged Chechnya since 1994 has ended, Islamic militants continue to mount regular hit-and-run attacks and skirmishes. Shoulder-fired rockets and mortars are increasingly used in recent months and increasingly against police, not just soldiers.

Ingushetia's Kremlin-appointed president, Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, was badly wounded in a suicide bombing in June and hasn't yet returned to his duties.

In a statement issued through his spokesman, Yevkurov said Monday's suicide attack had been organized by militants trying to assuage recent security sweeps in the Russia along the mountainous border between Chechnya and Ingushetia. AP

TRYST IN A LONG-LASTING LOVE AFFAIR
A VW Beetle is displayed at Pomona's antique automobile market on Aug. 16. Once a novelty, collectors and enthusiasts can sell and buy cars or car parts in Pomona, California. AP

Rights group: Iraqi gays tortured, killed

BAGHDAD—HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE WORsening and killing gay Iraqi men with impunity is a systematic campaign that has spread from Baghdad to several other cities, a prominent human rights group said in a report.

Human Rights Watch called on the Iraqi government to act urgently to stop the abuses, warning that so-called social cleansing poses a new threat to security even as other violence recedes.

The bodies of several gay men were found in Baghdad's main Shiite district of Sadr City earlier this year with the Arabic words for "pervert" and "puppy"—considered derogatory terms for homosexuals in Iraq—written on their chests.

The New York-based advocacy group said the threats and abuses have since spread to the cities of Kirkuk, Najaf and Basra, although the practice remains concentrated in the capital.

"Murders are committed with impunity, adversary to count, with corpses dumped in garbage or hung as warnings on the street," the 67-page report said.

Reliable statistics weren't available, Human Rights Watch said, blaming a combination of the failure of authorities to investigate such crimes and the stigma preventing families from reporting the deaths. But it cited a well-informed UN official as saying in April that the death toll was probably "in the hundreds."

The campaign has been largely blamed on Shiite extremists who have long targeted behavior deemed un-Islamic, beating and even killing women for not wearing veils and bombing liquor stores.

Shiite militiamen have for the most part stopped their violence against rival forces after radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's forces were routed by US and Iraqi forces last year and declared a ceasefire. But the report indicated they were conducting a less publicized campaign of social cleansing.

"The same thing that used to happen in Basra and Diwaa is now happening to gays," said a doctor who had fled Baghdad and was interviewed for the report. The doctor, who described himself as gay, said several of his friends had been killed.

An Iraqi Interior Ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged there has been a sharp escalation in attacks against gay men. But even by suspected Shiite extremists.

The former Soc. 2 official at the US Embassy in Iraq, Patricia Berrin, wrote in a letter to a US congressman that reports from contacts where some of the bodies were found "suggest the killings are the work of militias who believe homosexuality is a form of Western deviance that cannot be tolerated." AP

Chinese storm plant over lead poisoning of 600 children

BEIJING/HONG KONG—CHINESE protesters broke into a smelting works they blame for the lead poisoning of hundreds of children, smashing trucks and tearing down fences, state news agency Xinhua said on Monday.

More than 600 children living near the Dongting metal smelter, in northwest China, were found to have dangerous amounts of the heavy metal in their blood, and 154 are at risk they have been admitted to hospital, the report added.

Farmers were also spreading to one nearby village that a teenager had died in custody earlier by drinking pesticide after blood tests showed excessive lead levels, Xinhua said.

Ms Zhaolan, who like other victims lived near the plant, was diagnosed with a concentration of lead in her blood four times the recommended maximum safe level of 100 micrograms a litre.

She had paid for a blood test herself because she was near 14 years old, the government cut off for free tests, Xinhua said. Its reporters could not reach her family and neighbors said Ms had been sent to hospital in nearby Hunan city.

The lead poisoning scandal emerged last week, after worried parents took their children for medical tests.

All the affected families live near the Changqing industrial park in Hunan province. The county government was supposed to help relocate villagers living close by in 2006, but the plan is running far behind schedule.

The 180,000-ton lead and zinc plant suspected of causing the poisoning is run by China's fourth-biggest zinc producer Zhongjin Lingnan. A company source told Reuters it had been shut for repairs since late July and it was uncertain when production would resume. Xinhua said operations were suspended on Aug. 6.

China's pollution and his product safety standards have long been a source of criticism and unrest, particularly when tainted milk products in 2008 sickened tens of thousands—dubbed "cancer villages" because of high disease rates—but they are being ignored. Reuters

24 militants, 6 civilians killed in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN—UP TO 24 militants were reported killed Monday in air strikes and clashes in Pakistan's northwest, where six civilians were also killed by a car bomb at a petrol station, officials said.

Two children were among the dead in the blast in northwest Charsadda town, police said, which came after a lull in the past month of bombings blamed on Taliban militants avenging a punishing offensive against them.

Pakistan's military claims to have cleared northwest Swat district of Taliban fighters after launching a push in late April to dislodge extremists here of imposing a harsh brand of Islamic law in the verdant valley.

Sporadic outbreaks of fighting continue, but the government has urged the 1.9 million residents uprooted by the conflict to return home.

Overnight in Swat's main town Mingora, a suicide bomber blew himself up wounding four soldiers as they tried to arrest him, a military official said.

In Kohat village about 30 kilometers southwest of Mingora, six militants suspected Taliban militants were killed during a gunfight with soldiers late Sunday, the senior official said, asking not to be named. AFP

1,000 still stranded in Taiwan after storm

TAIPEI, TAIWAN—THE FIRST SURVIVORS OF TYPHOON and arrived Sunday as Taiwan struggled to reach more than 1,000 people still stranded a week after its deadliest typhoon in half a century.

As plastic sheeting for makeshift housing arrived from the US and water purification tablets came from Australia, cast drivers in the capital, Taipei, defied, dining riot and instant noodles to the island's hard-hit rural south.

President Ma Ying-jeou, who says the death toll from Morakot is likely to exceed 500, offered another apology for his government's response to the disaster after fatalities and more lives could have been saved.

"Sorry we were late," he told people in Pingtung County. "In the president, I will take full responsibility in getting the remaining work done well."

The head of Taiwan's relief operations, Mao Chi-kuo, fielded mounting criticism that authorities had failed to evacuate villagers soon enough, blaming the record rainfall instead.

"We received in three days the amount of rainfall that would normally accumulate over one year," he told reporters.

Morakot dumped more than two meters of rain in the naval south. The storm was the island's deadliest weather disaster since 1959, when more than 600 perished in a typhoon.

Mao said 2,000 villagers had been airlifted over the weekend, leaving about 1,000 still stranded in the ruins of flooded and landslide-hit villages. All together, 35,000 villagers have been rescued from 44 hard-hit villages in the south, he said.

"We understand that people wanted us or do better and do it faster," he said.

The rescue operation has relied mainly on helicopters because bridges collapsed and roads were washed away.

Reinforcement of an estimated 5,000 people whose homes were destroyed could speed up after a batch of prefabricated houses arrives from Britain on Sunday with more coming from China, the country's relief center said.

Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said helicopters from the US that can carry cranes and backhoes were expected to arrive soon to help in rescues and in the rebuilding of roads. AP

The WORLD

Alice Latreme B. Garcia

Japan exits recession

TOKYO—JAPAN ON MONDAY BECAME THE LATEST major economy to escape from recession, lifting hopes that a fledgling global recovery is taking hold thanks to massive pump-priming efforts.

The world's second-largest economy rebounded for the first time in five quarters, following Germany and France in returning to positive growth after the most brutal economic downturn in decades.

The news was particularly welcome for Prime Minister Taro Aso, whose long-ruling party risks being swept from power in an election later this month in voters irate to an opposition pledging a stronger social safety net.

Japan's economy grew 0.9 percent in April-June, after ZukoDaily revised 3.1 percent the previous quarter said by 3.8 percent in October-December 2008, the government said.

On an annualised basis, the economy grew 3.7 percent in the second quarter, outperforming the United States, the eurozone and Britain.

Thanks listed much better than the other major developed economies in the second quarter of 2009," said Masayasu Ito, senior economist Richard Investors.

But the rise largely because exports had fallen so heavily in the previous two quarters, he added.

Japan's exports rebounded 6.3 percent in April-June—the first increase in five quarters.

Japan plunged into recession in the second quarter of 2008 as a severe global downturn crashed demand for its cars, electronics and other goods.

The economy is expected to keep growing through the rest of 2009, said Barclays Capital economist Kyohei Morita.

"However, this is still a recovery underpinned by government policy measures and far from a self-sustaining upturn," he warned.

Japan ended recession before the United States, which shrank 1.0 percent in the second quarter, although that was also much better than a 6.4 percent drop in January-March.

Asia's biggest economy is benefiting from a recovery in its biggest trading partner, China, which enjoyed a stunning turnaround in the second quarter, helped by huge government stimulus spending.

Tokyo has also launched a series of stimulus spending packages—including cash handouts—to cushion the blow of rising unemployment, which hit 5.4 percent in June, approaching its post-World War II high of 5.5 percent.

Aso hailed the data as proof that his efforts to revive the economy are working.

"Since I became prime minister, I have done my best on economic measures," he told a televised debate with rival party leaders. "As a result, we have seen some signs of a brighter future for the economy."

But the announcement that Japan is technically out of recession offered little solace to its growing ranks of unemployed.

"I'm having a really hard time. I've been looking for a job for four months," said 30-year-old Ryoichi Okuo, who was searching for work at an employment center in Tokyo.

"It's impossible to expect an economic recovery right this year," he added.

Japan's economy also saw plenty of false starts during its 2000s "lost decade" and the fear is that the current green shoots of recovery might also soon wilt.

Economic growth is likely to lose momentum in the third quarter as exports have started to slow and rising unemployment is weighing on consumer spending, said RBS Securities economist Junko Nishioka. AFP

MOURNERS carry the body of one of the victims of a fire at a packed wedding party in Kuwait City during a group funeral on Aug. 16. Forty-three women and children were killed and dozens injured in the blaze, said authorities, but by a "quirk of" so-calle... AFP

Ex-wife owns deadly Kuwait wedding blaze

KUWAIT CITY—THE EX-WIFE of the groom in a Kuwait wedding party that turned into tragedy when a fierce fire engulfed a tent, killing 43 women and children, has confessed to starting the blaze, local newspapers reported on Monday.

Al-Qabas newspaper said the 23-year-old woman had told police that the tent period to torch the packed wedding tent to avenge her ex-husband's "bad treatment" of her before their divorce.

Interior ministry spokesman Colonel Mohammad Al-Sabei told state-run Kuwait Television that the fire—which engulfed the tent in just minutes—was an act of arson.

"We have identified the perpetrator who confessed to committing the crime for personal reasons," Sabei said, without giving any further details.

"Upset and nervous individual," was the headline in the English-language Kuwait Times newspaper, which said the bride escaped injured but that her mother and sister were killed.

Quoting unnamed security sources, Al-Qabas said the woman's Asian maid told police she saw her pouring petrol around the large women-only tent in the town of Jahra before the blaze started on Saturday night.

A total of 43 women and children have now perished and 90 others sustained injuries in the inferno, which destroyed the packed tent in the deadliest civilian disaster in the modern history of the Gulf state.

Last year, two women died and several others wounded in a similar incident in Jahra which has 300,000 of the capital.

Most wedding parties in the conservative Muslim Gulf state are segregated in line local traditions.

Mustafa said on Sunday that most of the bodies were burned beyond recognition and that because officials were working to identify other victims.

Relatives of the dead were buried on Sunday. Funerals of females are still going on establish the identities of the other victims. At least seven of the dead are children. AFP

Clerics demand Iran supreme leader's ouster

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES—A group of Iranian clerics has joined an anonymous letter calling Tuesday supreme leader a dictator and demanding his removal, the latest and perhaps strongest rhetorical attack on him yet in the country's post-election turmoil.

While the impact of the clerics' letter, said to have been authored by several dozen and posted late Saturday on opposition Web sites, may have been diluted by the withholding of their signatures, two Iranian experts vouched for its authenticity. In its publication followed criticism unusual verbal attacks on the leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in recent days.

Last week a group of former lawmakers issued their own letter, calling his qualifications into question. A day earlier, a member of the state body empowered to choose Khamenei called for an "emergency meeting" to address criticisms.

The letters do not pose any real threat to Khamenei, who retains the loyalty of the country's security forces and most of the political middle.

Still, the verbal attacks illustrate the extent of a powerful taboo. Long unquestioned, Khamenei's status as a unified arbiter and ideologue has suffered since he blessed the June 12 presidential election, which many Iranians believe was rigged. The harsh crackdown on street protests that followed has only deepened public anger with him. In recent days the phrase "death to Khamenei" has begun appearing in graffiti on Tehran walls, which would have been almost unimaginable not long ago.

In the letter, the cleric blamed Khamenei for the violence after the election, in which dozens of people were killed and possibly more since. They accused him of warning the Revolutionary Guards into "his own private guard, and the media into an instrument to defend and propagate him." REUTERS

RELEASED: Clotilde Reiss, French university teaching assistant, was freed on bail on Aug. 16. 36 weeks after her arrest on suspicion of spying. AP

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INQUIRER

Monthly, our Research Department will collate the results which will be printed in the features. Entries filled with good thinking/creative ideas/innovative approach/ provocative opinion will receive surprise prizes.

UK releases more UFO files; says sightings should be taken seriously

LONDON—THE DEPUTY COMMANDER of a US Air Force base in England was baffled by what he'd seen: bright, pulsing lights in the night sky.

Britain's defense ministry couldn't explain it either, but concluded that the incident filed Oct. 29 1980 posted on Friday.

The National Archives on Monday released the government's complete file on the "Rendlesham Forest Incident" of December 1980, one of Britain's most famous UFO sightings.

It was among more than 4,000 pages posted online Monday that mostly cover UFO sightings and encounters during the 1980s and 1990s. Over the past three years the Ministry of Defence has been gradually releasing previously secret UFO papers after historians' freedom of information demands.

The Rendlesham Forest incident, US Air Force Lt. Col. Charles Halt's firsthand account of the event, which has been public knowledge for many years. The file includes the conclusions of a British government investigation and a letter from a former defence chief urging officials to take UFO sightings seriously.

Halt reported that two servicemen had noticed "unusual lights" about 3 a.m. in the woods outside the gates of RAF Woodbridge, a US base in eastern England. He wrote that patrolmen sent to investigate saw "a strange glowing object" in the forest.

The metallic, triangular object "illuminated the entire forest with a white light," he wrote.

The next day, investigators found depressions in the ground and unusual radiation readings. That night many personnel—including Halt himself—saw a pulsing "red star-like light" in the trees that broke into five white objects and disappeared.

The Ministry of Defence would offer no definitive explanation for what the Air Force officers had reported seeing, but also found no evidence of "any threat to the defence of the United Kingdom."

Nothing had registered on radar, and "there was no evidence of anything having intruded into UK airspace and landed near RAF Woodbridge."

A 1980 letter in the file proposes a possible explanation involving a combination of the nearby Orford Ness lighthouse, a full moon and bright stars.

Case closed, as far as the ministry was concerned. But not everyone was convinced.

A 1980 letter from Lord Hill-Norton, former head of Britain's armed forces, to then-Defence Secretary Fred Mulley, complained that they "punting and dissembling" episode had never been explained properly.

Hill-Norton said if the sightings were genuine, "British airspace and territory are vulnerable to unwarranted intrusion to a disturbing degree." The ex-admiral's implication was that "a sizable number of USAF personnel or an important base in British territory are capable of serious misperception, the consequences of which might be grave to military terms."

Britain's defense ministry has charted UFO sightings since the 1950s, when a Flying Saucer Working Party was established. More files are due to be released by the archives through 2011.

Some of the newly released events seem without explanation.

In 1993 and 1994, the ministry received numerous reports of a "brightly illuminated oval object" over London. It turned out to be an airship advertising a sale.

Many people have seen UFO "smoke" on a computer in Widnes, northwest England, in July 2008. A police report said a young man—"a sensible sort of lad and genuine"—reported seeing a UFO flying hours of light into the ground.

A police officer sent in the scene found a smoldering rubber sheeper "It does look rather odd," reported the officer, whose name was blacked out to the document.

The files include a little gem for conspiracy theorists.

The head of the ministry's UFO desk wrote briefing notes in 2003 reporting a spate of sightings in southwest England and speculating whether they might be connected to Area 51, a secret US spy plane whose existence has never been officially admitted.

Atop one of his letters, someone scrawled: "Thank you. I suggest you now drop this subject."

The files reveal a 2006 spike in UFO sightings, 609 that year, where the supernatural TV show "The X Files" was popular in Britain at the time, and where the abovementioned movie "Independence Day" came out the year prior. AP

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Editor Raul G. Marvelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano
BUSINESS

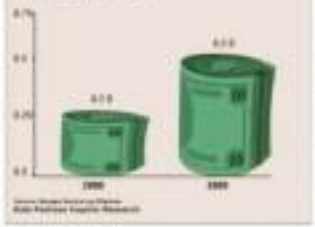
Autodesk Wii

Remittances rose 3.3% in June to $1.5B

Undaunted by global crisis, overseas Filipinos sent $8.5B in first half

INQUIRER MONITOR

OFW remittances at $8.5 B (January to June 2008-2009, in US dollars)



By Michelle V. Rosca

REMITTANCES CONTINUED TO DEFY PREDICTIONS OF A DECLINE in the wake of the global economic recession, growing 3.3 percent in June to $1.5 billion and bringing the total inflows from overseas Filipinos to $8.5 billion in the first half of 2009.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that remittances from January to June this year were up 2.9 percent year-on-year.

"The continued growth of remittance flows since January this year accompanied by emerging signs of improving global economic conditions have affirmed the positive outlook for steady remittances for 2009," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

The BSP earlier projected that remittances would post solid growth this year, but noted that it was a conservative forecast. Tetangco previously said there was cohesion for a positive, full-year growth in remittances this year as indicated by the robust employment of Filipinos in jobs offshore.

Some private sector economists earlier said the Philippines might suffer from a contraction in remittances this year because of the global turmoil. However, the fact that remittances continued to grow as of the first half and reports that the world economy was gradually recovering from the crisis prompted some to revise their outlooks.

HSBC, which earlier expected a decline in remittances this year, said recently that it was no longer seeing a contraction. HSBC economist Frederick Neumann said in a briefing last week that remittances were now seen to post at least a flat growth this year. He said revised OFW remittance forecast of HSBC would be announced soon.

Remittances are a closely watched economic indicator because it largely influences household spending, a major driver of the economy.

MORE FINANCIALS B2

FINANCIALS

CURRENCIES

PESO/DOLLAR RATE

$1 = ₱ 47.380 x 1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 17, 2009

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

As of 12:17 p.m. (source: market operator) Page B2

Stocks close lower on profit-taking

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 2.77 PERCENT lower yesterday, hurt by weak US investment and investors cashing in ahead of the last of the lean calendar that the Chinese consider unlucky, dealers said.

The composite index fell 74.81 points to 2,771.18. Its broadest in three weeks, while the all-share index gave up 43 points or 2.58 percent to 1,703.08.

Turnover reached 3.84 billion shares worth ₱2.9 billion with 114 issues down, 46 up and 20 unchanged.

The peso traded at ₱ 47.252 to the dollar in morning trade yesterday.

"BSI-consumer confidence was weak, and while Japan's economy improved there was still a negative spin to it," Jose Enrico of MS Capital Securities told Dow Jones Newswires.

He expects further consolidation with the last spot on Aug. 20 as he cushed the lower "ghost" month. But is usually a slow period for Philippine equities.

Philex Mining fell 2.66 percent to ₱10 while Manila Electric dropped 3.59 percent to ₱2.65. Property developer Megaworld dropped 7.25 percent to ₱1.28. AFP

NLEX LINK

MNTC readies ₱10-B tollway projects

By Doris C. Dorotan

NORTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY (NLEX) concessionaire Manila North Tollways Corp. is planning two new tollway projects worth a combined ₱10 billion that will connect the key expressway to Macarthur Highway and Leon in Malolos.

The first road segment (I) is a 3.83-kilometer six-lane expressway linking NLEX to Macarthur Highway and the other (segment 1.81) is a 5.00-km. four-lane expressway linking Macarthur Highway to Leon, Malolos, which is in turn a gateway to the port area, top officials of MNTC publicly listed parent company Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. told reporters in a recent corporate cruise to Hong Kong.

The two tollroads are part of MNTC's phase 2 of the Manila North Expressway project, also known as the C-5 loop, which is purely a "greenfield" or new expressway spine, along a total of 22 kilometers. MNTC president Romeo Fernandez said during the briefing held at the office of PhilPhos Co. Ltd.

"Travel time from Macarthur High- MORE B2

TETANGCO

BSP sees low interest rates till 2010

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS has expressed confidence that even with the 2010 elections, interest rates would remain relatively low next year.

Given this, the BSP said there was no pressure for the national government to do a pre-funding this year before 2010 national budget requirements. In the same way, corporate entities from the private sector need not necessarily obtain speculative fund inflows since would opt to wait out with the national elections running.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said inflation was likely to remain benign until next year, as far as central bank estimates showed. Given that the domestic and global economies would still be soft next year, so will demand and inflation.

"Tempered inflation will not give much reason for bond investors to seek much higher yields from government securities and corporate bonds.

"Our studies show that elections have not had significant impact on interest rates. Therefore, if because of elections alone, we don't anticipate interest rates [to] move much," Tetangco told reporters.

Although the initial expectations is that elections tend to spook investors and encourage them to seek higher BSP 61

Meralco, Philex stocks drop on MVP comments

By Doris C. Dumlao

SHARES OF MANILA ELECTRIC Co. (Meralco) and Philex Mining Corp., two blue chips involved in an unexplained bidding war between the groups of local titans Manuel V. Pangilinan and Ramon S. Ang, led the local stock market lower yesterday.

Aside from the much-awaited correction in the market, traders said the stocks were affected by comments from Pangilinan, who is chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and executive chair of First Pacific Co. Ltd. of Hong Kong, that Meralco was trading much higher than its true value.

Meralco's share price dropped by 8 percent to P223 per share.

Dealers also noted a block sale of about 1.9 million shares of Meralco at the stock market yesterday, crossed by CLSA Securities, at P238 a share. Despite assurances that Meralco shares were expensive at current market prices, dealers suspected that Pangilinan's group was still accumulating shares from the open market.

His group earlier acquired a 20-percent block from the Lopez clan at only P90 a share. Another 15-percent block was picked up from the open market and still is controlled by affiliates in First Pacific's local infrastructure holding company Metro Pacific Investments Inc. for P5.26 a share. This price, Pangilinan said, represented the fair value of Meralco.

Philex Mining, on the other hand, fell 2.4 percent to close at P10 a share on profit-taking after a strong run-up last week.

One trader noted that the share price of Lopezes Mining Corp., which fell 3.3 percent to P0.29, was also affected by Pangilinan's comment.

"They think there's a risk that SMC might not be willing to pay a high premium for Lopezes," the trader noted.

Fair market values

Security Bank net profit up 8%

SECURITY BANK CORP. REported a net profit of P1.4 billion in the first semester, up 8 percent from a year ago, on the back of a double-digit expansion in net interest income.

This translated to a return on equity of 20.1% percent, one of the highest in the local banking industry, further improving from the 19.2% percent ROE seen for the whole of 2008.

"Our focus on building new core business while prudently managing risks in our earnings stream have been successful," bank president Alberto Villanueva said in a statement yesterday.

"Our sound balance sheet gives us the leverage to explore different opportunities. While signs of a global economic recovery still appear tentative, we maintain our guarded optimism for the economy and the bank," he said.

Total operating income for the six-month period grew 22.4 percent to P5.8 billion year-on-year, primarily driven by the 24-percent jump in net interest income to P2.9 billion. This was supported by an expansion in its loans by 20.9 percent to P66.4 billion.

The operating income was tempered by an 11.9-percent decline in other income, which reached P1 billion. With the reduction in interest rate rebuilding trading and securities gains increased 12 percent, but this was offset by a 23-percent reduction in foreign exchange gains and service charges.

"Balance sheet health remains to be a top priority and care for more in the first-half 2009 performance, showing off an increase in resources of 16 percent to P140 billion from June 2008's P121.7 billion," SBC chief financial officer Carlos Borromeo said.

"The 23-percent increase in the loan portfolio shows the bank's steady shift in its balance sheet profile as loans now accounts for 47.4 percent of total assets versus 43 percent recorded a year ago. This result was achieved while imposing more quality in terms and capital strength," Borromeo said.

Doris C. Dumlao

EDC nets ₱2.68B in first 6 months

By Aerry R. Ruivo

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORP. (EDC) YESterday said its net income rose 2 percent to P2.68 billion in the first half due partly to foreign exchange gains.

In a filing with the Philippine Stock Exchange, EDC said it realized foreign exchange gains of P1.33 billion during the period from the translation to peso of the yen- and dollar-denominated loans using June 30 closing rates.

The gain was a reversal of the P1.94 billion in forex losses recorded during the same period in 2008, the company said.

EDC, the Philippines' biggest producer of geothermal energy, also reported that its net income represented 20.1 percent of its total revenues in the first semester.

In terms of remaining net income, EDC said it generated P981.4 million during the period, down 27.6 percent from a year ago.

"The decline was mainly due to the P1.33-billion increase in operating expenses for the maintenance of field facilities and southwest of geothermal wells, (the) P59 (per) combined by the P1.094-billion increase in total revenues, P463 million net realized foreign exchange gains and the P6.89.7 million decrease in finance tax," EDC explained.

Total revenues for the period increased 10.7 percent to P10.71 billion from P9.67 billion last year primarily due to the new higher average price per kilowatt-hour for electricity sales.

Revenue from the sale of electricity likewise jumped 10.3 percent to P9.84 billion from last year's P8.92 billion on account of higher regional average price by 26.96 centavos/kWh.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Issuance of TESDA Commemorative Car Plates

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) through the National Government Budget intend to apply the sum of **₱ 4,000,000.00** being the total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for the production of TESDA Commemorative Car Plates. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION, 3rd Floor, TESDA Administration Building, TESDA Complex, East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway, Taguig City from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested bidders from the above address and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **Fifteen Thousand Pesos Only (₱ 15,000.00)**. The method of payment will be in the form of CASH. The bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his/her authorized representative.

TESDA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to all interested parties on August 26, 2009, 2:00 p.m. at Ground Floor, Learning Center, TESDA Administration Building.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the OTTI Conference Room, Learning Center, Ground Floor, TESDA Administration Building on or before September 9, 2009, 2:00 p.m. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Republic Act 9184, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Bid Invitation, Post-Qualification and Awards of Contracts.

TESDA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders and to waive any required formalities therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposal as evaluated is most advantageous to the Authority.

(Sgd.) T. S. SANICO
BAC Chairperson

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of August 17, 2009

FX TRADING

August 17, 2009	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	1 USD	1.000000	47.5000
Japan	Yen	100 JPY	0.010638	0.5053
United Kingdom	Pound	1 GBP	1.648352	78.2967
Hong Kong	Dollar	10 HKD	1.290323	6.1290
Switzerland	Franc	1 CHF	0.952381	45.2381
Canada	Dollar	1 CAD	0.892857	42.4107
Singapore	Dollar	1 SGD	0.699301	33.2168
Australia	Dollar	1 AUD	0.819672	38.9344
Bahrain	Dinar	1 BHD	2.652520	125.9697
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	1 SAR	0.266667	12.6667
Brunei	Dollar	1 BND	0.699301	33.2168
Indonesia	Rupiah	100 IDR	0.009804	0.4657
Thailand	Baht	1 THB	0.028986	1.3768
UAE	Dirham	1 AED	0.272109	12.9252
EU	Euro	1 EUR	1.418440	67.3759
Korea	Won	100 KRW	0.078125	3.7109
Kuwait	Dinar	1 KWD	3.436426	163.2302
Taiwan	Dollar	1 TWD	0.031153	1.4797
India	Rupee	100 INR	0.020790	0.9876
Malaysia	Ringgit	1 MYR	0.284091	13.4943
New Zealand	Dollar	1 NZD	0.678426	32.2252
Qatar	Riyal	1 QAR	0.274725	13.0495
Oman	Rial	1 OMR	2.597403	123.3766

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Now comes the ghost month

MARKET RIDER

Ben Somera

THE OFFICIAL PERIOD OF THE ONE-month ghost month is starting this week. It is to begin on my favorite day, Thursday, Aug. 20. Yet, as it occurs, it is again coming to cold and unexpected—as usual.

I clearly remember the market was already expecting it at least a month ago and most bankers and investors in the class also started to get low. This overlayed observers of this seasonal event to be more cautious for its coming soon.

But unfolding events swept all that away. The overflow of encouraging trading sessions on Wall Street seem to summer sally and others consider heads contributed to lift local trading activity higher and higher until last Friday, when the specter of the Chinese ghost month again came into play.

Coincidentally, stock prices on Wall Street fell sharply as it closed last Friday. This sent the Dow Jones Industrial Index to fall to almost one percent. This also sent the Nasdaq lower by 1.19 percent and the broader market index S&P 500 by almost one percent, too.

US investors obviously become worried about the reported decline in retail sales; consumer spending is an important factor to the US economy. It accounts for two thirds of all American economic activity. It is that significance that it plays a crucial role in the performance of the US economy to emerge from recession soon.

Market observers, however, interpreted the sharp fall on Wall Street to be just another aberration. The major indices finished well off their lows of the day which they took as a sign that the future prospects of the market is not all that grim. In addition, the light volume that likely skewed asset prices is said to be insignificant with no discernible effect on the overall outlook of the market.

Results of week 10

How about our local market? What is in store? We are entering the ghost month, a period said to be indeterminate in direction that more often than not leads to unexpected sharp market drops and serious price falls.

Based on the trading activities of our market-driven in the virtual guess, the ghost month is constituting to reckon with and active trading is the prudent strategy to undertake to hedge risk exposures, a strategy to maintain as poised to change direction.

Three of the seven virtual players appear to have seemingly or unwittingly learned of this market trading strategy. They were QB Tinlin, The Oracle and Trust Me.

It was The Oracle, however, who did the most activity to secure his risk exposure after cancelled purchasing his losing Nomura Uni for Week 10 of the virtual contest with a performance achievement of 122.94 percent return on investment (ROI). But it was the CycleRoader who stole the thunder from everyone with her concoct of 5.95 percentage points achievement growth rate for Week 10. Below are the results of their latest performances standings. (See table)

Bottom line spin

Just before starting to write this article, I went to animated discussion with several friends on what is to when the market is heading to. After a very long debate, we didn't seem to arrive at a definitive conclusion as to when it will definitely head to. But all of us were admirably all of a sudden gripped by the aura of the ghost month this week. As an advice, therefore, remember that "It's better to be approximately right than precisely wrong."

By the way

Do you know Stephen Culjejeng? He's called "Stevie" by people close to him in the financial circle and just "Culjejeng" by rivals who are possibly annoyed by his hard-to-resist smile with top local company houses like TSC of SM fame and MVP of PLDT-Meralco-MVGC-Philex fame, among many other notable personalities in Philippine business. You'll no longer be seeing him in action as vice chair of Assets for the Macquarie Group but as senior advisor of Everone Business Inc. of New York, to build the company's presence in Asia. I wonder though if he left behind his shadow in Macquarie. They were inseparable. In any case, more power and good luck to you, Stevie!

(You may reach the Market Rider at marketrider@inquirer.com.ph or directly at denosomera@yahoo.com)

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Portfolio Summary and Overall Performances Standings

For Week Ten: August 13 - 1st, 2000

Delays hit 1 in 3 ODA-funded projects

Right-of-way, procurement problems hamper implementation, says Neda

By Russell W. Dumlao

ONE IN THREE FOREIGN-FUNDED projects remains hobbled by delays despite general improvement in disbursements in the first semester, according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

Neda reported that 31 ongoing official development assistance (ODA) projects had used less than half of funds released "due to procurement-related and financial processing issues and other issues such as right-of-way."

Data from Neda showed that a total of P82.6 billion in ODA money was disbursed from January to June, an increase of 86 percent from the same period of 2008.

Ongoing projects covered under 91 loans account for a total of $6.87 billion.

The increase in disbursements was largely attributed to the single-tranche release of two program loans—the $150-million Governance Reform Support Program, together with the Asian Development Bank and the $200-million Global Food Crisis Response program development policy operations with the World Bank.

In terms of disbursement rates or the percentage of actual release of funds over target disbursement, some of the worst performing (include the World Bank-funded Decentralized Farm Income and Market Development project. Out of which $41.45 million was planned for release but only $13.62 million was absorbed or used.

Other examples are the Northrail–Southrail Linkage project planned P29.03 million, actual of only P783,000; Rural Road Network Development project $3 ($125.69 million, or $7.6 million); and Air Traffic Management Systems Development ($225.16 million or $0.81 million).

According to Neda, 31 projects were suffering less than 50 percent disbursement rates.

Even then, the overall capacity of projects to use funds increased to 86 percent in the first semester from 60 percent during the year-ago period.

The biggest source of ODA was the Japan International Cooperation Agency with 40 project loans worth a total of $4.17 billion.

Other big donors are the World Bank with 35 projects and six programs worth $1.91 billion; Asian Development Bank, 15 projects and four programs worth $1.8 billion; and China, six projects worth $1.1 billion.

Ramp up mobile operation, banks urged

By Abigail L. Ho

BANKS SHOULD SERIOUSLY consider offering more mobile banking transactions, as the ubiquitous wireless found-ation make the proposition increasingly viable.

According to a recent study by research firm IDC Financial Insights, the number of bills adoption was "disappointing," and not being up-to-the-minute in terms of mobile banking technologies and offerings may leave banks selling their more expensive counterparts short.

The study, titled "Market Analysis: Retail Mobile Banking Vendor Survey Results—Mobile Banking Will Move In Fast, Just Not Today," stated that while the use of available mobile banking services was still low, this should pick up soon, considering the huge number of wireless handsets available and the consumers' demand for "instant" services.

"This is the time for banks to start to include strategies for mobile banking or risk playing catch-up once usage does take off," said Brian DeGroote, IDC Financial Insights research manager for consumer banking and cards in Latin America banking.

Here in the Philippines, the potential for mobile banking is huge, given the country's more than 36 million mobile subscribers in the relatively unserved mobile banking industry.

According to the IDC Financial Insights Study, consumers will be the "killer application" that will catapult mobile banking to the mainstream.

Leading mobile operators Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. both have mobile payment systems that subscribers have started to embrace.

Smart's Smart Money has around 6 million users, while Globe's GCash has about 1.2 million users.

DA releases P1B for infra deals

By Rica T. Dichoso

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA) released more than P1 billion out of a P7-billion P-Pinoy (Philippines) agricultural infrastructure project with the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The Rural Productivity Enhancement Sector (RaPIDo) Project involves the construction of farm-to-market roads (FMRs), community-owned irrigation systems, potable water supply as well as capacity-building programs for local government units (LGUs).

The project aims to combat poverty in 77% of the country's poorest municipalities through infrastructure improvements.

DA Undersecretary for Field Operations Jesus Emmanuel Pama, who leads the RaPIDo project, said in a report that "roughly one-seventh of the total loan" had been released.

The bulk of the funding, Pama said, went into the roads, irrigation systems and potable water systems.

Pama said that 144 contract packages were awarded under the project.

"All the projects under the ADB-funded initiatives were and are being closely monitored through consultation visits by our DA regional field staffs, whose staff [is also tasked to] visit to the LGUs concerned," Pama said.

Of the targeted 1,476 kilometers of FMRs, about 1,092 kilometers were either finished or in the final stages of completion, representing an accomplishment rate of 74 percent. These were in 41 provinces in Ilocos Sur and Ilocos, Bicol, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao.

And all 1,404 hectares covered by the project were irrigated.

Meanwhile, 21 or 49 percent of the targeted 37 potable water systems have been built.

MNTC readies P10-B tollway . . . From page B1

way to the port area will be shortened by about an hour.

Three new segments can be done on the MNTC level, Fernandez said. But for the new projects plus an earlier announced P16-billion new NLEx-to-Southern Luzon Expressway connection road, Fernandez said new sources of funding would have to be studied.

The 9 and 10 and the connector, there's a bigger story, Mr. Infante says (MPTC) might go to the market both through debt and equity," Fernandez said.

MPTC chief finance officer Christopher Lim said segment 9 and 10 were still in the planning stages and have yet to obtain board approval. But these are part of the network of tollways planned by MPTC.

There are P30 billion worth of new projects on the table, the scope of which are beyond the MNTC concession.

For MNTC alone, phase 1 is already in commercial operations. This involves the rehabilitation, expansion, operation and maintenance of the existing 84-km NLEx and the Candaba Viaduct; Macapagal Avenue, Gil Puyat Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, Taft Avenue, Coastal Road, Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX) and the Cavitex Extension and Radial Road 10 (R-10).

Phase 2 is referred to as the C-5 loop and has four segments that include segments 9 and 10. The two segments number six and seven are acquired and are under implementation. It is set the 2.27-km Mindanao Avenue to Mabini-Aguinaldo avenue to previous (segment 8-1) and the 10.3-km-to-four-segment loop between CP Garcia Avenue and Mindanao Avenue (segment 8-2).

Remittances . . . From page B1

Remittances for the whole of 2008 reached $16.4 billion.

The P2B-billion remittance boom to the Philippines were not so much affected by the global economic crunch because there were alternative labor markets that were opening up and favoring Filipino workers.

According to the BSP, the main sources of remittances were the United States, Canada, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Italy and Germany.

The labor deployment ratio could be a reason why 1.9 million had been laid off in Taiwan and other Asian countries. But it added that some of them were already being asked to report back to work. The government agency also said alternative labor markets have increased that the demand for nurses and Filipino workers in the top human resource choice by many foreign employers.

BSP sees low . . . From page B1

risk premiums. Bernanke said that however, would slow that interest rates increased significantly increased last because of elections.

Some economic managers also said investors were already used to Philippine politics and were unfazed by the political noise as the political terms, they continued to enjoy doing business in the country because of a robust consumer spending.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said in a roundtable discussion with business reporters and advisers last week that the national government set its limit according to the recession.

As capital markets borrow be in 2010 funding requirements.

For next year, the government will need to borrow to plug an estimated budget deficit of P320 billion, likely to be equivalent to 2.8 percent of gross domestic product, and to settle maturing obligations.

The government has completed its foreign commercial borrowings for this year already. It was still continuing with its domestic borrowings through the monthly auction of government securities.

The government expects its budget deficit to hit P280 billion this year.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BUSINESS

eTelecare to merge with NYSE-listed firm

Deal will create 5th largest BPO company in the world

By Gavin C. Dandan

THE AYALA GROUP has bagged a leading global business process outsourcing (BPO) platform after a landmark listing carry on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) for its local BPO specialist in a new deal to merge the operations of eTelecare Global Solutions Inc. with those of Boston-based peer Stratos Global Services Inc.

Ayala is very excited on this combination because it creates one of the five largest BPO companies in the world and one of the most competitive in geographic distribution, technical support and cost and sales," Alfredo Ayala, chair of eTelecare and CEO of the Ayala group's BPO investment company Ayala Investments Ltd., said in a conference yesterday.

Ltd.® announced that its joint venture company BSS Corp., the direct parent company of eTelecare, has entered into a definitive agreement to combine with Stratos Global Services on a share swap, in a result, the current Stratos Global will own about 57.5 percent, while the deals' BSS will own 42.5 percent of the combined entity.

The union will create a global BPO services company with a present revenue of $1 billion in 2010 and approximately 30,000 global employees, of which about a third will come from the Philippines. It will have an interest in 50 solution centers in over 20 countries in North America, Europe, the Philippines, Latin America, India, the Middle East and Africa, a unit of Telecom, Ayala and Stratos Global statement said.

The statement added that the combined company would operate under the Stratos Global Services name globally and under the eTelecare brand in the Philippines. It added that the combined entity would have "a broadly diversified Fortune 1000 customer base, a very experienced executive team, and balanced and prudent leadership across a wide range of initiatives, including the technology, retail, entertainment, media, communications and financial service sectors. It is expected to draw upon the service strengths of each business's integrated service offerings, which range from revenue generation, to customer care and technical support, to warranty, consultation and services."

The boards of directors and principal stockholders of both Stratos and BSS have unanimously approved the transaction. They include Aon Management LLC and certain founding Stratos stockholders representing 90.2 percent of the Stratos's outstanding shares, as well as Linden and Providence Equity Partners LLC, who together own 100 percent of BSS Corp.

In a statement, Ayala Corp. president Fernando Zobel de Ayala said the local conglomerate believed that the combined entity would be uniquely positioned to deliver a full range of market leading solutions to clients. "The combination also underscores our belief that the Philippines is playing an increasingly critical role in the outsourcing strategies of global clients, due to its many advantages, such as a large and high quality workforce and robust infrastructure," Zobel de Ayala said.

ETelecare president John Sheridan said: "This combination fulfills our strategic vision of extending our delivery capability throughout North America, Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa."

The statement said Gilbert Santa Maria, who would continue to lead eTelecare's Philippine operation, would also replace Sheridan in the integration of the two companies' operations in the market. The combined company will employ approximately 30,000 in the Philippines and 1,300 from Stratos in the Philippines.

"We are very positive about this combination, as it will strengthen our presence in the Philippines, and enhance our ability to achieve industry leading service levels and operating efficiencies for our clients. It also means stronger revenue growth for our operations here, and as a result, more career opportunities for our people, and more jobs for the country," Ms. Maria said.

With this union, Ayala will become the new executive vice chair of the board of directors and will remain the non-executive chair of the company's Philippine entity. Of the 10 members on the new board, Ayala will appoint three directors and one independent director. Ayala and Providence will together also appoint three directors and one independent director.

The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions, including the submission of an information statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission and several regulatory approvals including clearance under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act. The transaction is expected to be closed by September 2009.

Retail prices decline in NCR

By Reena V. Dominguez

RETAIL PRICES IN METRO MANILA DECLINED at a faster rate of 2.2 percent in June, on account of reduced food and nonfood prices, the National Statistics Office (NSO).

Based on the NSO's latest report on the general retail price index (GRPI) for the National Capital Region, the year-on-year change in overall prices has been on the negative for the second straight month.

The GRPI records change in wholesale prices of staple goods including food, beverage and tobacco; inedible crude materials except fuels; mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials; chemicals including animal and vegetable oils and fats; manufactured goods; machinery and transport equipment; and miscellaneous manufactured articles.

A decrease in the price increases were seen in half of the sub-indices, with the largest change observed in the heavily-weighted food index at 11.9 percentage points from 2.6 percent in May.

Also, the increase in prices of beverages and tobacco eased at 4.4 percent from 4.6 percent; and 2006 core materials except fuels, 0.9 percent from 4.4 percent; and machinery and transport equipment, 3.2 percent from 3.4 percent.

On the other hand, price hikes in chemical products stayed at the previous month's level of 2.8 percent but that for miscellaneous manufactured items quickened to 3.8 percent from 3.1 percent.

On a monthly basis, the GRPI in NCR increased to 0.6 percent in June from 0.1 percent in May.

The NSO attributed the month-to-month increase to monthly prices of mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials which fell to 3.2 percent in May.

Similar increases in month-over-month chemical products and with miscellaneous manufactured goods index prices inching up by 0.1 percent each in September, respectively, from having recorded no monthly growth in May.

Cadan readies Mindanao venture

By Nica T. Globinaldo

VANCOUVER-BASED MINING FIRM Cadan Resources Corp. has raised $2.5 million in gross proceeds from private placements to fund its operations in highly mineralized areas in Mindanao.

Company president and CEO Brett Tucker said in an interview e-mail that the proceeds came from 25,000,000 units priced at $0.10 each.

Each unit consisted of one common share of the company and one half of one common share purchase warrant.

Every whole warrant will entitle the holder to acquire one common share of the company at $0.15 per common share until Aug. 7, 2011.

"The gross proceeds from the private placement will be used to advance development of the Tboli gold-silver deposit and drill-test exploration of surrounding area, further drilling and leaching analysis of the Pagsan-Kinamatian porphyry copper-gold property," he said.

The Tboli project is in Brgy. Kematu, municipality of Tboli in South Cotabato province. The Pagsan-Kinamatian project is in Compostela Valley.

The proceeds will also provide the company with additional working capital, Tucker said.

Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) chief Horacio Ramos welcomed the development as this will promote the Canadian company's momentum in pursuing its projects in the Philippines.

"Cadan is still on exploration and feasibility study stage. They are focusing on a new technology for base metal leaching of copper. If this proves successful, a less capital cost will be needed," he said.

The use of bacteria for leaching metals is apparently becoming an increasingly important alternative to conventional extraction processes for the mining industry.

Cadan's project in Tagum, estimated to have a total development cost of $100 million, is next in line of the "bright spots" in mining amid canceled mines caused by the global economic downturn.

The Canadian firm is among the miners in the exploratory stage that have reported creating strongbinding contracts, exploration and feasibility studies—which is good news for the Philippine mining industry.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines said the International Finance Corporation (IFC) approved contracts that mining companies which have zero or no-carried funding could be held back by the global financial crunch. This, even though the Chamber of Mines was quick to point out that such companies are also adept at working with cheerful budgets.

The Philippines is targeting $800 million to $1 billion in investments this year after missing that same billion-dollar target in 2008 with just $600 million drawn in.

The Philippine mining sector aims to attract between $1.9 billion and $10 billion in investments by 2013 and becoming "one of the country's pistols" against the global economic slump. Environment Secretary Lito Atienza said in an earlier interview.

NGCP ordered to pay ₱30M in fees

By Jerry R. Barros

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION (ERC) has ordered the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) to pay close to ₱30 million in regulatory fees for four transmission projects, after it denied the company's petition for exemption.

In four separate filings, the ERC said the NGCP is not exempt from paying the permit fees for authorization to increase its equipment, construction, operation and installation of new units, increase of capacity or the extension of assets or property and equipment in the course of transmission or for service.

The ERC has thus ordered NGCP to pay ₱22,278 million in permit fees for the replacement of the existing transformers of the San Jose substation, which covers approximately 40 percent of Metro Manila's power needs.

NGCP has also been ordered to pay ₱6,271 million in permit fees for the Sta. Rita-Quingua-San Jose 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission project; ₱1,917 million for the Silvertown-Cavite 69 kV transmission project in the Visayas; and another ₱1,044 million for the procurement of a 750 megavolt ampere transformer for the Araneta substation.

According to the ERC, the legislative intent of Republic Act No. 9513 is to exempt NGCP only from the payment of taxes, duties and investments such as those imposed to the concession of the state's holding powers.

"It does not exempt NGCP from the payment of regulatory fees, such as those imposed pursuant to the exercise of the state's police power," ERC explained.

The four projects formed part of the NGCP's plan to develop and improve the power transmission network in the country to keep up with growing demand.

NGCP operates of the country's nationwide superhighways, earlier said it would invest close to ₱93 billion over the next three years in transmission projects covering the three main power grids.

Data from NGCP showed that for the period 2009 to 2012, NGCP plans to invest ₱9.50 billion in the Luzon grid, ₱9.26 billion in Visayas and ₱10.32 billion in the Mindanao grid.

NGCP president Walter W. Brown had said that such transmission projects are part of the company's effort to upgrade and expand the power grids, at the same time align their operations and maintenance practices with global standards.

The upgrade of transformers and facilities is part of the company's transmission masterplan, which is currently under development.

For 2009 alone, NGCP has identified 11 priority transmission projects, of which two are in Luzon, four in Visayas and five in Mindanao.

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How Crickette Tantoco can have her rice and eat it, too

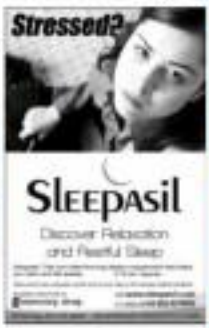
And she still looks fabulous

By Margie C. Enriquez
Correspondent

WHILE MOST people tend to look 10 lbs heavier in photographs, no thanks to the inevitable distortion of the camera lens, foodie Crickette Tantoco is photogenic and fit as a result of sweats and Pilates. Lately, certified exercise coach and dietitian Ashen "Wawa" Feliciano guides her to build the muscle-needed curves.

When she's not doing exercises

>>> CRICKETTE C2



GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

B. LEIGH — BY JULIA BERNA

FUSSO BARDY — BY PP. JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOVEKNOTE — BY ELIZABETH CHICHOCO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEPHEN PABALINAS

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

TULOOK — BY MARK COLL

DEH — BY DANG, SKELTON

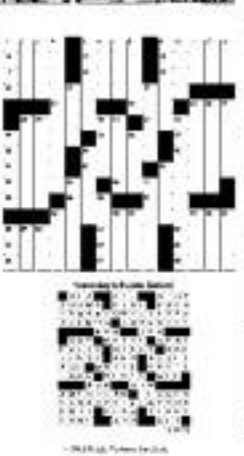
ATOMO AND WEBOY — BY LYRA GARCELLANO

BIKO MACHINE — BY MARK ARBEN

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DIANE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

4 3	1 6	8
7	4	3
9		5
5	2 7	3
1		6
2	3 5	7
7		9
5	3	2
4	1 2	8 3

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Toos and program of www.conceptis.com

Answer to previous puzzle

2	3	1	4	7	8	6	9	5
8	6	7	5	9	1	3	4	2
4	9	5	3	2	6	8	7	1
9	1	5	2	6	3	4	8	7
6	4	8	7	1	5	9	2	3
3	7	2	9	8	4	5	1	6
1	8	4	6	3	7	2	5	9
7	9	3	8	5	2	1	6	4
5	2	6	1	4	9	7	3	8

How Crickette Tantoco can have her rice and eat it, too

From page C1

week, she is a dedicated follower of fitness trends ranging from swimming, step aerobics and cycling to dancercise, Tai Bo and yoga. When there's an interesting gadget on TV, she won't hesitate to try it. Of the physical activities she's engaged in though, tennis and Hatha Pilates have helped her maintain her weight.

She enjoys savoring rare dishes and checking out restaurants, and insists on eating out in every meal. Has fortune finally found the right fitness activities, she'd have a "cyst-ry syndrome" with her weight. Today, regular tennis helps her burn calories. "You're always moving to the beat (but quickly). I don't feel like I'm exercising," she says.

Her overall body conditioning, she reveals, starts with Shadow Conception, a local fitness instructor and one of the trainers of B+E Studio. Beat Pilates incorporates contemporary exercise routines to some training and an updated approach in the use of the spine.

"While the classical method teaches them to a connection between stomach muscles and the back, Beat Pilates incorporates the mood for exercises that maximize the natural curves of the spine. It also focuses on expelling the muscles around the joints, deeper and expansive breathing and proper placement of the rib cage and shoulders.

"Marilou Concepcion sends me many groups of my body—its strengths and weaknesses," says Crickette from Pilates helps her curb her limits and discover muscular imbalances. She goes an routine to maximizing a balanced distribution of weight throughout the body and to the correct placement of muscles and bones.

"I've been engaged in sports and exercise all my life. I never had the self knowledge of the body in the way Pilates offered it. In other sports, the imbalances and weaknesses are hidden. In Pilates you can't hide it," she says.

CRICKETTE at ease on the exercise equipment, with (from the left) the Upright Bath and Beat Firefly.

TRAINER Mayra Feliciano and Crickette on the BOSU ball, which was also the stabilizing exercise used by Japanese athletes.

THE GLIDING disc engages muscles in the upper body and lengthens the entire muscle groups.

Got the right curves

Crickette has been training under Feliciano for three years now. Feliciano, who is discreet about her celebrity clients, describes her program as "sculpting with balanced fitness." She points out that each program is individualized to suit the proportions and fitness level of her client.

"I don't do crazy with running, lifting and stretching which address the components of fitness—strength, endurance, balance and flexibility," says Feliciano.

"Most programs keep you fitter and streamlined but sacrifice the curves in the end. I remember weighing scores which enable the client to achieve their desired proportions and to fit me. This program is not cookie-cutter. Any body is beautiful even if you are bigger. Proportion makes the body beautiful. The goal is that when you walk into the room, you stand out and look gorgeous," says Feliciano.

Her office many exercises which target muscles that can't be reached by weights, machines or other techniques.

"The exercises involve extensions, activation, toning and training focused on the regional movements. They all aim to get the client into the right size before they start toning," says the trainer. The secret it in moving slowly and with control to empower the muscle instead of relying on momentum.

For Crickette, the designed to program that combines compound moves of cardio-vascular activity and sculpting.

"At the start, Crickette had a good exercise history and was highly motivated, but she was a bit squirrely. A change of monotony is possible with the right exercises. We needs sure that the different parts of her body were in the right ratio to each other so that she is more graceful looking. Crickette is curvier now," says Feliciano.

From a squirrely body shape, Crickette now has an hour-glass figure. The main agenda was the posterior. "Crickette had a tight butt, but now it's perky and lifted. In the butt exercises, we also eliminate the banana fold by combining stretches and resistance exercises," explains Feliciano.

Crickett recalls, "Based on my measurements, I initially had lots of square because my butt was getting saggy." She makes a conscious effort to squeeze the muscles or glutes exercises with control to get a firm derriere.

The last weak body, Crickette does some strengthening exercises combined with light weights. Some exercises employ the BOSU (Both Sides Utilized) ball, which is half of an exercise ball. The body bounces to develop balance because many core muscles are needed in order to stand up on the ball.

"The BOSU ball challenges your stability. You are forced to work on your abdominal while working the heart," says Feliciano.

Crickette has her body the illusion of a tiny waistline. Curiosity was also given exercises to develop the shoulders and arms. She sculpted.

Cross-training

As a runner, Crickette runs uses the gliding disk which mounts the thighs. She performs compound exercises or a combination of upper body exercises while enhancing its polymer discs.

Feliciano explains that the importance of cross-training outside the individual's main fitness activities. "This contributes to his total look," she says.

Crickette has been rooting on two-a-day workouts in her Universal Fitness Line Dance Outfitter called composites. Jumping and bounding on the trampoline tasks the large more powerful so that they act as a complement to pump for toning your legs, the heart, lessening compression the tension from the body as it is pulled by gravity. Then, its subsequent propulsion to the air decreases the pressure to the cells and stimulates the flow of nutrients and blood circulation. Feliciano adds that as a low-impact exercise, extended exercise into the pressure off the weight-bearing joints.

With her workout with Feliciano, Tantoco is all smiles—and it's not just because of her buns. "The ideal is not about being thin. Everybody wants that. It's about being proportioned and having curves."

How to firm up flabby arms

CALL THEM "BATWINGS" OR "sausage arms." Sagging triceps are a concern of legions of women. "When you lose fat, the skin does not adhere closely to the muscle. You need exercises to bridge the gap between them," says trainer Aiden Feliciano. She recommends adopting exercises that are combined movements that target the hard-to-lift areas.

1. Lengthen both arms overhead, palms facing outwards, while keeping the shoulders down. Feel the tension in the muscles.

2. Pointing the right shoulder from the shoulder socket, draw the right elbow parallel down to the side of the body. The palm faces forwards.

3. Lift the right arm back to the original position.

4. Repeat on the left.

Marge C. Enriquez

Legumes help prevent lung and prostate cancer

INSIDE OUT
CUTY DAVIDSON

GEORGE MICHAEL MATSUMOTO-ito and author of "The Inflammation Free Diet Plan," says there is a need to build a strong antioxidant defense to slow down this molecular damage. "Even helping prevent cancer, but especially age-related diseases such as heart disease, cancer, arthritis and osteoporosis."

Furthermore, having a high-antioxidant eating plan helps prevent lifestyle diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

While there is no foolproof plan to look young and be disease-free, adopting a healthy lifestyle can delay the onset of diseases.

Consider the several of-noble-friendly foods: Capsicum, cherries, shiitake mushrooms and eggplants.

Interwoven—considered a natural pill because it has zinc, selenium and isoflavones which are said to help eradicate flavonoid oil, olive oil and dark leafy vegetables.

•Ghrelin. Inside, chickpeas—considered boosts the body. Legumes rich high in the food guide pyramid because of their flavonols, which protect against chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, lung and prostate cancer and even fatal vascular diseases, according to Dr. Vincent Gasperin, author of "The Good Diabetes: the 21st Anti-Aging Breakthrough."

•Protein—Rich legumes maintain muscle mass, reduce insulin resistance and repair DNA.

•Water—Drink 6-12 glasses of clean water daily to prevent water problems.

•Cayenne and oregano help detoxify the body.

•Garlic, onions and eggs contain sulphur which have a cleansing effect on the body.

Dr. Gasperin's top 10 foods to avoid because they accelerate the aging process—sugar, refined flour, potato chips, white bread, white potatoes, iron oil, sugar-processed cereals, sugar-processed snacks, red meat, hotdogs and doughnuts.

Go natural

While it seems easier to buy expensive lotions and antiseptic surgical procedures, an amount of exercise and aesthetic makeovers can substitute for remedies provided by Mother Nature.

Natural flask

Drink one glass of coconut water (without sugar) every hour the whole morning. This is natural cleanser for kidneys.

Take 2 tbsp of virgin coconut oil for colon cleansing.

Detoxify and moisturize your skin by rubbing SOS all over your body. Rinse/shower after 10 minutes.

Affirm: "Today, I declare victory." Love and light!

Reference: Wellbeing Magazine (www.wellbeing.com.au)

And now, a mega-mall in Tacloban

By Yuuko Baga-Reyes

TACLOBAN CITY, GEARING UP TO be a highly urbanized city in Eastern Visayas, is now home to a retail giant that aims to boost the city's thriving economy and business competitiveness.

Robinsons Tacloban, the 224th mall of the Gokongwei shopping chain, recently opened its doors to a massive crowd of shoppers—Taclobanons, Leyteños and basically all—eager to experience "mallking."

The first mall to operate in Eastern Visayas, a region of more than four million people, is located in Tabunoc, Marasbaras, Tacloban City.

The mall's inauguration was attended by top executives from Robinsons and JG Summit group, including Senior Executive Vice President Chairman and chief executive officer, Lance Gokongwei, JG Summit president and chief operating officer Robina Gokongwei-Pe, Robinsons Retail Group senior vice president, President Cyb. Robinsons Land president and chief operating officer Johnson Robert Go, Metrowalk general manager

LEYTE Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Robinsons Metrowalk general manager Bobby Go and Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez

FREDERICK G. Go, Robinsons Land Corp. president and COO, and Lance G. Gokongwei, JG Summit president and COO

Lourdes Gokongwei-Cheng, Robinsons Land Corp. president and COO, and Lance G. Gokongwei, JG Summit president and COO.

Imelda Marcos-Araneta call center.

"With the opening of Robinsons, we hope to be a regional destination," said Frederick Go. "We want to serve all the residents of Tacloban, the whole province of Leyte as well as Samar.

"Tacloban is a good city, well-populated yet underserved," he added. "Its local government is very dynamic and very welcoming. That's always very important to us. In a way, it inspires us to accelerate our entry to Mindanao."

More local jobs

The opening of Robinsons in Tacloban has also generated jobs. Go estimated about 3,000 locals have been employed, directly or indirectly.

Fifteen of the companies in a hotel to be constructed next to the mall. The first five floors will also be retail outlets, and probably a hotel-stay to connect the two phases. It's really about time. The requirements and the airport expansion will be completed, thereby paving the needed hotel. I think one of the greatest opportunities now after the shopping mall will be a hotel."

Despite the economic downturn, Go believes the Philippine economy is still doing well.

"We're very optimistic about retail spending. Everyday, people have to eat and drink, everyday, the people have to shop. And shopping malls seem to be the segment. We're not selling out inside the mall. It's an overdue lifestyle and we think people will carry on with the lifestyle. Our malls cater to all classes of society. Perhaps we'll be able to serve all the residents of Tacloban City or the entire Region 8. We hope this will be the first of the terrific destinations in Eastern Visayas," he said.

Tapestry lineup

With 85 percent of the tenants already located, Robinsons Tacloban has leading retailers and food (fast-food) retail players.

Johnson Go, general manager of the department store, said stocks and supply by ladies' wear and apparel will also be at current rate in Manila.

Local shoppers can also check out other shops, restaurants and services including Bench, Levi's, Converse, Guess, Alberto, Blue Bees, Ikea Shop, Travel Club, The Gardenias, Pizza, Red Hot Ribs, Shakey's, Jollibee and Goldilocks.

There are also outlets owned by local and regional entrepreneurs, such as Cristina's Station and Spot (owned by Dr. Elsie Bonnales Romualdez), M. Lhuillier Jewelry, Kamotan and Hue (owned by the Lhuillier of Cebu), Charito's Delights (Lucas Bonacci and ICD Boutique (Jeanne Peñas Dato).

Local favorites are also now on the opening day sales. Charito's Delights, offering Lucas delicacies such as pastillas de cebu, mazapan de pili, cassava and yema, had raked in about P50,000 by 5 p.m. The mall opened at 10 a.m. Ilong Hotel had estimated sales of P50,000 to 200 thirteen pieces sold by 12 noon of that day. The appliance center reported an estimated revenue of P600,000.

RLC is opening their store shopping malls in key cities of the region, including Bacolod, Iloilo, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro and Robinsons Cybergate-Davao.

THE 100th "New Balance Power Run ... Raising Hope" will raise funds for the cancer awareness projects of the Philippine Cancer Society (PCS), Cancer Research and Wellness Community (Carewell) and iCan Save (ICS). From left: Dr. Rolly Salvador of PCS, Bobbit Tantoc of Carewell Community, Angel Locsin for Carewell Community, Atty. Abigail de Leon of ICS, Robert Brimo and Rachel Alejandro for ICS, Arnie Gonzales of Planet Sports, Inc., Akiko Thomson for Carewell Community, and Anthony Tantoc

Race event raises funds for cancer victims

THE 100th "NEW BALANCE POWER RUN ... Raising Hope" will raise funds for the cancer awareness projects of the Philippine Cancer Society (PCS), Cancer Research and Wellness Community (Carewell) and iCan Save (ICS).

The 2007 "New Balance Power Run ... Raising Hope" is the eighth edition of the race. Proceeds will benefit Carewell Cancer Resource and Wellness Community), Philippine Cancer Society (PCS), and Kindness Foundation.

There are registration forms from all the forefront of providing support to help improve the lives of men and women diagnosed with cancer. They work with fundraising groups and individuals to spread their advocacy on cancer awareness.

The 2007 "New Balance Power Run ... Raising Hope" will feature 21K, 10K, 5K, and 3K runs with registration fees of P500 for the 21K run, P350 for the 10K run, and P300 and P250 for the 5K and 3K runs respectively.

Registration is ongoing until Sept. 30 at the New Balance outlets in Glorietta, Shangri-La Mall, Festival Mall, Planet Sports Boulevard, Planet Sports Trinoma, Planet Sports 4 Mall, Runner's Bodies in Bldg. Street. Registration forms are also available at www.newbal.com.ph. For the 500 to register for the 5K run will get a BB 10-cm Run Dolls Tshirt while finisher medals await participants of the 5K, 10K and 21K runs.

More information on the "New Balance Power Run ... Raising Hope" is available at www.newbalance.com.ph.

Water-resistant jackets, dry-cool shirts

ALL-STAR HAS A wide array of choices that will complete the wardrobe ensemble of a sports buff.

This season, All-Star has new jacket designs perfect for the rainy days. These jackets come in water-resistant fabric, guarantee to keep a person dry and protected. There are also new shirts that provide maximum comfort with Mr Sun's special Dri-cool technology that makes use of sweat-resistant fabric.

The breakthrough technology allows the skin to breathe, preventing it from excessive wetness, discomfort and itching. Aside from water-resistant jackets, cool jackets and Dri-cool shirts, there are also bermuda pieces like jogging pants and shorts, also made of microfiber lightweight material.

All-Star is exclusively available at all SM branches.

What is the significance of dreams in our daily life?

HERE ARE QUESTIONS FROM A 4th year college student of the Eastern University requesting me to answer them for a paper he is preparing:

1. What is your interpretation of the word "dream?"

A dream is the language of the subconscious mind. We spend one-third of our lives sleeping. One of the activities of the sleeping mind is to dream.

2. What is the significance of dreams in our everyday life?

Dreams, properly analyzed and interpreted, can tell us a great deal about our every day life. It can tell us if there is something wrong with our health. It can tell us what is going to happen in the future, as well as what happened in the past. It can tell us what's happening in the present. It can help us find solutions to our problems. It can even give us important messages from our departed loved ones. And many more.

3. Does every dream have a meaning?

Yes, but not all meanings of dreams are important. Quite a good number are trivial or insignificant. But we dream should be ignored because it may contain significant hidden meanings.

4. What's the difference between a dream and nightmare?

They are both products of the sleeping mind. A nightmare is a dream that has a scary or negative message. One wakes up from a dream without a feeling of fear or apprehension. When one has a nightmare, he wakes up in fear.

5. How important are dreams?

Very! Even the Christian Bible gives much importance to dreams and considers those who are able to interpret dreams to be close to God, such as Daniel who interpreted the Pharaoh's dreams.

Dreams are important for our health and well-being. Ancient philosophers and thinkers regarded *dreams as harbingers of news about the future. The Greeks, Romans and Egyptians regarded dreams with respect and awe. Modern-day psychologists like Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung gave much importance to dreams in understanding the psyche of an individual.*

Modern researchers who have presented people from dreaming - by waking them up when they are dreaming) found that the subject soon developed anxiety, emotional problems, inability to concentrate and even nervous breakdowns.

Some of the greatest scientific discoveries, inventions and poems were a result of dreams.

6. Is it true that a person experiences over a hundred dreams but only remembers less than four upon waking?

According to the pioneering research on dreams done by Dr. Stanley Krippner and Montague Ullman at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory in Brooklyn, New York in the '70s, a person experiences at least 20 dreams in one evening, *three of them, however, are forgotten upon waking.*

7. Is it true that people dream of what they desire the most?

Not necessarily. People also dream of things they hate the most like if you really desire something very badly, you are likely to dream of it. This is called "self-fulfilling prophesy."

8. How could dreams help us?

There are many ways in which dreams can help us. First, they can help prepare us emotionally to accept a future tragic event. They can warn us of things to come. They can help us understand why we behave in a particular way. They can help solve problems we may have. And many more.

9. and 10. Are dreams the same as premonitions? In what ways are they different?

No, dreams can be of the past, present or future events. Premonitions always refer to a future event. Furthermore, dreams take place only when we are asleep. Premonitions can occur to us even when awake.

11. Have you ever encountered being in someone else's dream?

Since we are all connected on a subconscious level, it is not surprising that people can dream about us and we can dream about other people. This is not unusual.

12. Are you afraid of seeing someone die in your dreams? Why? Is it possible for that dream to come true?

Dreams are not necessarily literal. They may be symbolic only. Therefore, dreaming of the death of someone you know does not necessarily mean physical death. So why be afraid?

Note: The next Back 1929 & Intuition Development seminar will be on Aug. 22-23, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the NBI Prince Plaza 1 Cond., 104 Legaspi St., Greenhills, Makati. Call 810-7245/815-98-90; e-mail jaimelicanco@yahoo.com.

Editor Rosario Q. Valente

ENTERTAINMENT

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TFC on mobile

ABS-CBN'S "THE FILIPINO CHANNEL (TFC) MARKETS USA" now with the launch of "TFC on Mobile" in Japan, where subscribers can now view news and entertainment shows from compatible phones. The is made possible via a partnership with DMX Corporation and Kinsh Inc. Monthly subscription fee is ¥1,050 (P527.04).

DID YOU KNOW...

Pappy don't preach

By Jose Javier Reyes
Core Beator

MAYBE THE DUST HAS SETtled; maybe not. There is really no telling where this latest episode in the dramatic life of Willie "Happy" Revillame will go. But even the controversial host will agree: The show must go on.

After receiving the brunt of a massive condemnation, including an online petition to bash his head and be banished for allegedly committing the ultimate act of arrogance and recklessness on national television, Willie has decided to go on an indefinite leave from his daily noontime program.

He hopes this momentary self-exile allows him to zoom for self-examination and contemplation. It's time to lick his wounds and make a head count of his true friends and lowest adversaries, and try a more logical perspective of what exactly transpired on that unique and fateful Monday afternoon.

Actually, the conflict point is clear. The country was listening Cory's passing and "Showtime" was in full swing. While reality-radio hitted the host to catch a glimpse of the beloved former President's flag-clad coffin, the executive limits was showing a glimpse of barely clad women wiggling their booties and behaving in a fashion rather accustomed to what normal people should be doing at 1 p.m. any day of the week.

But such a public display of flesh and flesh has long been acrepted to the norm in Willie's world. A good part of Revillame's role-reinforcement is memory overload—comic in very too loud, energy sexy over-the-top. And the bevy of female co-hosts (some merely extensions their spirit) they represent.

Since ABS-CBN chose not to preempt "Showtime" to give way to the coverage of the transfer of Cory's remains from La Salle Green Hills to the Manila Cathedral, Willie was right in saying that he had to do what he had to do. So, Happy, the show must go on.

HAPPY! JR!

Cast against type as villain

By Reuyen Sen Diego Jr.

GMA 7 TALENT NADINE SAMONTE (former's mixed gripping villain in Marian Rivera's "Dyesa."

In the new series, Nadine is cast against type as a socialite, in the dual role of sweet Diana and freakish Babaeng Impakta.

Nadine denied earlier tabloid reports that she was unhappy to be relegated to formidable parts, because she had played lead roles in previous Regine-driven soap showcases.

"I was misunderstood," she said. "What I said was that I am happy with whatever project GMA 7 gives me."

NADINE SAMONTE

Especially, she said, since her role in "Dyesa" is quite demanding owing to the character's schizophrenic nature. "It's kinda difficult shifting from good to bad."

"Dyesa" reunites her with Marian, "the second together as 'Super Twins,'" Nadine said. "She played my mom."

They re-bonded during the soap's shop before. "Dyesa" started production. "That's my friend from way back, but we became closer at once with each other after that," said Nadine.

The gals also had the same leading man in the past, Dyo Ibrin.

Did they swap pointers and reminisce about their wee and real-life pasture? Nadine laughed. "Ay, no. Marian and I shouldn't talk about those things! Seriously!"

She refused to be diplomatic about her reported rift with fellow Kapuso babe Glaiza de Castro.

Should they hang date each other, Nadine said, "I'd rather not chat with someone if I feel I'll been hurt. I'm not plastic. I wouldn't pretend as if nothing happened."

1st Pinoy-made Nat'l Geographic docu

"NIGHT TITANIC," ABOUT THE TRAGIC SINKING of the 900 (with the other colliding with an iceberg off Modern Island just five days before Christmas in 1987, is the first Filipino-made full-length National Geographic-Channel documentary. It will be shown on Aug. 23 at 9 p.m.

Directed by Nan Lanaton, the documentary will feature first-hand accounts of survivors and rescuers, transcripts from the Philippine congressional inquiry into the tragedy, archival footage and photos and a reenactment of the collision that killed 4,000 passengers.

CLICK!

Lanaton, who is also a writer, producer and cinematographer, has several Kuwaiti films to his credit, the most notable of which is "Hayat (The Echo)," a horror film that was remade in Hollywood.

Executive producer Sakiyuki Hiramatsu, who started developing the field work in October 2004, said the team in Kuwaiti to have interviewed the remaining survivors "who were willing to tell their 1987 Christmas story."

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1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 THE HANGOVER

PIONEER

1 G.I. JOE
2 THE HANGOVER
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

STA. ROSA

1 G.I. JOE
2 KAMASUTRA NIGHTS 2
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

LIPA

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 THE PROPOSAL
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

DASMARINAS

1 THE HANGOVER
2 G.I. JOE
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

IMUS

1 G.I. JOE
2 THE HANGOVER
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

STARMILLS

1 THE PROPOSAL	4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO	5 G.I. JOE
3 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE	6 ORPHAN

ANGELES

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 ORPHAN
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

TACLOBAN

1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 G.I. JOE
3 THE PROPOSAL

BACOLOD

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 PUBLIC ENEMIES
5 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE
6 THE PROPOSAL

ILOILO

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 PUBLIC ENEMIES
5 HAUNTED
6 THE PROPOSAL

Pappy...

From page D1

because it was given the imprimatur to do.

Regardless of what one personally felt about what Willie said at that precise moment of irritation and frustration, he was right to be pissed off. His reaction was quite logical and, to some extent, even commendable.

His demand was valid. From any angle, it was somewhere unwillingness to have a video window showing the Aquino cortege rio to rio a throng of people clapping and thumping their fists, and everyone simultaneously having choreographed screams. It was surreal: a circle exploding with color, noise and movement on split screen with a outfits inching its way through crowded streets full of citizens breathing the fum of their saintly lives.

Pappy was indignant about this inexcusable. He did not realize that his unnecessary explosion—boosting his outwards would be held against him like a sword stirred to his throat.

Bluntly put, Willie was misunderstood. But blatantly stated, he had some actors really had. It was a wrong choice of words, wrong timing...and very wrong signals. We all tend to get tongue-tied and literally trip all over our words when overcome by great emotion. Even we those who can handle that such a moment. After all, not everyone is an hopia-chess as, ah, Kris Aquino.

Media persona

And there's the rub. Pappy's anger slid not come across as moral indignation; in the eyes of many, it simply looked like an unbridled display of arrogance and bullying...or egomania. The buzz word stuck again, perception. Everything boiled down to what people chose to see and hear.

Here, the media persona comes into play. Willie's is in your face, an assurance (if you will) for fan fans that he is not afraid of anyone and says say what he wants the way he wants it, because unapologetic long ojos like's you're keeping it real.

Also, Willie has long been known for bearing his stuff on cues. Some say he is only being a performance or that the route of doing a show six hours a week can create all manner of emotional short circuits. But that is beside the point, really.

The audience could not care less if you are having a nervous breakdown, collapsing from fatigue or inching your way out of another scandal. The show must go on. And on and on. That is why shows like hotshots can have cover magazine editions dedicated to their acquisitions—real estate, cars, yachts, jewelry. The flip side of this coin is not so nearly.

There is another ugly truth: Regardless of power and popularity, in one way please everybody. There will always be people who will make a vocation of hating you. They will see you downhill at divine justice as weak.

Willie has been very, very lucky. His career path resembles an obstacle course where he always emerges as winner. His television career has been a series of dramas and startling comebacks. This a ruby many feel a little bit of bubble a newsman—no one deserves so much good luck in a single lifetime!

Willie's success came from feeding television what his audiences so badly needs. The monster has turned around again and taken another bite off him.

Gabby...

From page D4

leaves a smile on people's faces.

True to form

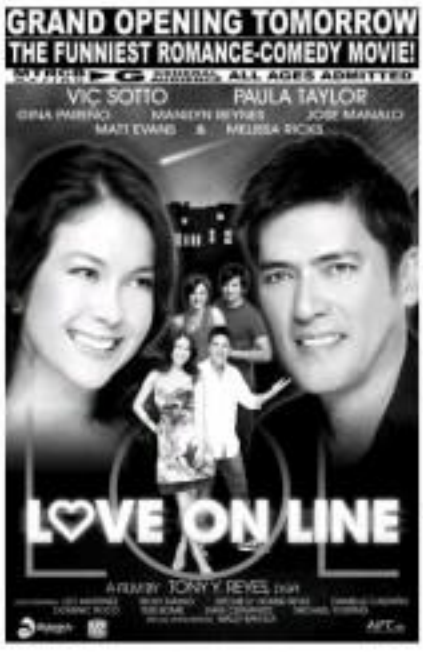
Lady Gaga brought the house down during her jam-packed concert at the Araneta Coliseum when she said, "Someone asked me...must...If I had a dick. I told him, 'No and it's bigger than yours.'"

After (m)y from up to her name's Tagalog meaning.

Challenging

Ejay Falcon, Xian Lim and Enchong Dee battle their biggest challenge to achieve the remake of the '80s blockbuster, "Bagets" as they compete for movie roles portrayed by Erich Gonzales. The series premieres Aug. 24 on ABS-CBN.

I remember bringing pictures of the cousins "Enrico," Dingdong Avanzado's launching movie, to my high school class. It caused quite a commotion. My brother had a big crush on Dina and even came out with her name. That's when my friendship with Dina and her sis Alwyn started. It would be great if Dina and Gabby could be part of the remake.



Gabby enjoys being Willie for a day

GABBY CONCEPCION DANCED shirtless during his Willie Revillame in "Showtime." Kids gushed, "Sarap pala! may gano'n doon."

But his easy acting will always be his true passion, and he's all set to unleash the actor in him once again in his new soap, "Dalid May Isang Sabi."

"Magandang laro rin ito," he says. Now to be like the character? "We're both victims," he says, laughing. Gabs says have been weird and absurd many times but the beauty of his hotel has remained intact.

Senator Revillame!

Manny Villar has reserved a slot for Willie Revillame in the Nacionalista Party's senatorial ticket. It may not be a good idea after Willie caught the ire of Tita Cory's supporters. Remember it's not what Willie says but how he says it. Although the Aquino clan has forgiven Miss Alma Moreno (a Pilipino) for endorsing Jinggoy Estrada, Willie is headed by Jerry Yap himself. Will the high ratings of "Wowowee" translate into votes?

Frame per frame

Cesar Montano for me is one his diverting techniques: "And after six months, every important aspects of every scene is highlighted, frame per frame," Robin is in the process of selecting cast members for a Filipino historical movie that he will direct. He is also spearheading a could reel restoration program in Baliuag. Robin just can't stop doing things for the love of it since pre-showbiz.

Proof of courtship

Eugenee Domingo squealed on Flicks Pictorial, producers of her hauntching movie, "Kimmy Dora". "Kimmy also admits Piper (a) dropped by the set with El Canterpillar. Dats it! so sweet. Dats on her exciting love-danger!" Victorious thrill will have words for Up.

Reading

We gave "And I Love You So" a "B" seeing as the Eumina Evaluation board. Sam Milby's acting has improved a great deal. But although Bea Alonzo and Sam look good together on screen, John Lloyd Cruz and Bea have better chemistry. The perennial screen partners ought to be reunited in a film called "And I Love You More."

Delightful Dimples

Dimples Romana is such a delight to chat with. She never runs out of amazing stories about her co-stars. "When Sam Milby got a new fashion, I asked him to leave the dressing room for a while (ayan di ko kaya kapupulotan niya," she told us. "And in my room with the VI as "Si Sen Mo", where I had to make her hungry, (ako na kasi ako dun, ipinapaayos VI ang fanera niya. Gusto niya cute pa rather I did it. I couldn't stop apologizing, though." Just in Dimples' name connotes grace, her animated storytelling

GABBY CO

Distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, Philippines

8 local albums in overall chart

#2A Segovia

odyssey MUSIC & VIDEO

THE TOP-SELLING ALBUMS IN THE Philippines for the week Aug. 3 to 9, based on Odyssey Music & Video store chain sales reports:

Overall

1) "The Essential Michael Jackson," Sony Music; 2) "How Me Mga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 3) "My Inspiration," Charice, Star Records; 4) "Silang Silang," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 5) "The Fame," Lady Gaga, MCA/Aftab; 6) "Live," Aiza Seguerra, Star Records; 7) "Addicted To Acoustic," Princess Velasco Mercado; 8) "Unchanging Love," Jessie Padilla, Polyfloat Records; 9) "Songs Rediscovered 2," Jed Madela, Universal Records; 10) "Kris Aquino: The Greatest Love," Various Artists, Universal Records

OPM

1) "How Me Mga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 2) "My Inspiration," Charice, Star Records; 3) "Silang Silang," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 4) "Live," Aiza Seguerra, Star Records; 5) "Addicted To Acoustic," Princess Velasco Mercado; 6) "Unchanging Love," Jessie Padilla, Polyfloat Records; 7) "Songs Rediscovered 2," Jed Madela, Universal Records; 8) "The Greatest Love," Various Artists, Universal Records; 9) "Hit Ako Ng Todo," Rico Blanco, Star Records; 10) "The Ate Reichmann Songbook," EMI Aurora, Ivin Records

KRIS Aquino

US Top 10 singles

The best-selling recorded music in the United States, including digital downloads, as they appear in next week's issue of Billboard magazine:

1) "I Gotta Feeling," The Black Eyed Peas, Interscope; 2) "You Belong With Me," Taylor Swift, Big Machine; 3) "Best I Ever Had," Drake, Universal Republic; 4) "Knock You Down," Keri Hilson feat. Kanye West & Ne-Yo, Interscope; 5) "Use Somebody," Kings Of Leon, RCA; 6) "Down," Jay Sean feat. Lil Wayne, Universal Republic; 7) "Good Girls Go Bad," Cobra Starship feat. Leighton Meester, Atlantic/RSF; 8) "I'm Running," Jason Kingsley, Epic; 9) "Hard Knock Life (Ghetto Anthem)," Pitbull, RMG; 10) "Boom Boom Pow," The Black Eyed Peas, Interscope